

# THE END OF TIME

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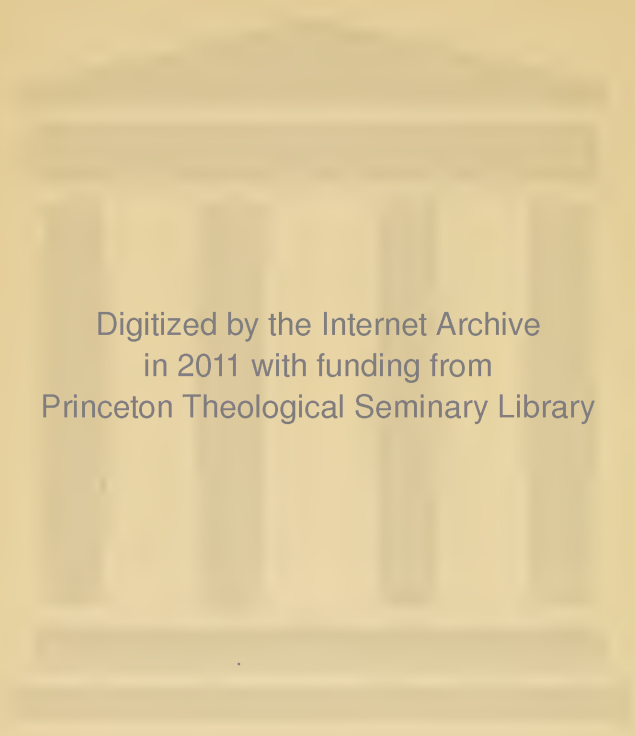
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# THE END OF TIME

A POEM OF THE FUTURE

BY

L. G. BARBOUR, D.D.

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G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

NEW YORK  
27 West Twenty-third St.

LONDON  
24 Bedford St., Strand

The Knickerbocker Press

1892

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Electrotyped, Printed, and Bound by  
The Knickerbocker Press, New York  
G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

THE END OF TIME



# THE END OF TIME.

PROEM.

SCENE : *Heaven.*

ANGELS.

Still winging on our endless flight,  
From the great, silent Past we come ;  
And age on age hath sunk in night,  
Since first we knew Thee, God our Home.  
Sweeter, than in those earliest hours,  
Each voice attuned Thy praise to sing ;  
And mightier every angel wing,  
Than when it tried its new-fledged powers.

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Ages on ages countless lie  
Before our view, and we shall gain  
A stronger arm, a keener eye,  
A holier love, while Thou shalt reign.  
Th' impetuous winds sublimely sweep  
Across the pathless waste of Ocean ;  
And traverse we without emotion  
Our broader sea, our shoreless deep ?

O 't is a vast, unspoken bliss  
 To struggle up with strong endeavor ;  
 As cycles close, to feel but this—  
 That we are nearer Thee than ever ;  
 To mount to regions all untrod,  
 Higher and higher yet to press ;  
 And then with veiled face confess,  
 That Thou art still the Unknown God.

## RAPHAEL.

I saw from out a boundless sea  
     A fairy island rise,  
 O'erspread with beauty's mystery,  
     O'erhung with loveliest skies.

It rose from out the vasty sea  
     With a sweet and musical sound  
 Of waters rippling cheerily,  
     As they girdled the beach around.

Straightway leaped up the smiling hills  
     With a sudden and playful bound,  
 And from the heights the gurgling rills  
     Came forth to bless the ground ;

Came forth to bless the valleys green,  
     And the forests so bravely clad ;  
 God looked from heaven upon the scene,  
     And the Maker's heart was glad.

O might it be my joy again  
To trace the flowery glade,  
To wander up the leafy glen,  
And watch the bright cascade ;

To bend o'er cataracts wild and hoary,  
Dashing to earth in spray,  
And mountain tops in solemn glory,  
So pure and so still away ;

To see the golden light of even  
Stream on the grassy dell,  
And think, "O were it not for heaven,  
How sweet on earth to dwell !"

## MICHAEL.

God of all wisdom and power, my fortress, my  
shield, and my buckler,  
Cover my head in the thick of the fight, in the  
fore-front of battle.  
Swear I by Thee, O Eternal, that art, and that  
wast, and that shalt be.  
Swear only Thou by Thy life,—I live, I live, saith  
Jehovah.  
Forth from its scabbard my good sword leaps,  
when I think of the Dragon,  
Satan, the chief of Thy foes, the maligner of God  
and His angels.

Down in his sulphurous bed, he stirred up the  
fires of Evil,  
Far underneath the beautiful isle, the isle of the  
blue wave.  
Upward the flames of hell came bursting through  
valley and mountain,—  
Bursting and rending their way, and heaping  
up chaos on chaos,—  
Seething the founts, and the limpid streams, and  
the lakes into frenzy ;  
So that the waters that fondly embraced the  
island, now maddened,  
Rushed on the shore, as if to engulf it, and finish  
the ruin :  
While as the winds that erst had breathed o'er  
the valleys so softly,—  
Fearing to wake the leaves, and the flowerets out  
of their slumber,—  
Shuddered, and shrilled, and shrieked o'er the  
deep-toned roar of the billows.  
Far overhead the heavens grew black, and the  
Night was upon us,—  
Night on the beautiful island, Night on the sor-  
rowing Angels.

GABRIEL.

Lord of all grandeur and glory, so loving, so gra-  
cious, so tender,



Down from the loftiest height of Thy heaven there  
fell on the island  
Light of Thy light, and began its long, long  
struggle with darkness ;  
Day-spring that, dim at the first, yet ever grew  
brighter and brighter.  
Stronger and stronger it grew, till it drave out  
the horrible blackness.  
Hushed was the tempest's roar, and stilled was  
the rage of the ocean.  
Little by little the grass came forth and the timid  
young flowers.  
Little by little the forests again clothed valleys  
and hill-tops.  
Now, though the beautiful isle could nevermore  
be what it had been,—  
Fearfully scarred as it was, and torn and rent into  
gorges,—  
Yet by Thy wonderful working the mountains  
rose nearer to heaven ;  
Deeper the depth of the lakes, and sweeter the  
founts and the streamlets ;  
Fairer the winsome flowers that blushed on the  
dales and the hill-sides,  
Hid themselves in the gorges, and peeped from  
under the snow-drifts,  
Greeting the joy of the sunlight, and bathed in  
its roseate splendor.

Solemn and grand was the voice of the winds as  
 they chanted through pine groves,—  
 Solemn and grand in its strength, but plaintive  
 and sad in its weakness,  
 Moving the hearer to tears by its piteous wail,  
 and its sighing,—  
 Wail, that changed to rejoicing, and sighing to  
 jubilant triumph.  
 Such was the beautiful island ; we wait to see  
 what it shall be.

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Why, Almighty, does yonder isle, afar on the  
 ocean  
 Pour out fire and smoke evermore from infernal  
 abysses?  
 Why do the winds yet rave? Why do the billows  
 still thunder  
 Curses upon the blackening shore, aye, curses  
 forever?  
 Day is thine, and the Night is thine, the Light  
 and the Darkness  
 Both of them publish thy praise, and both of them  
 tell of thy glory.  
 Day unto Day utters speech, and Night unto  
 Night showeth knowledge ;  
 Day, when the sun goeth forth like a bridegroom  
 out of his chamber ;

Night with its nebulous heights, and its fathomless depths so appalling.  
Sweet is Thy goodness, O Lord our God, and fearful Thy justice ;  
God, our strength and our song ; O God the joy of our gladness.

ALL ANGELS.

Thou art our strength and our song, and Thou art the joy of our gladness.

SOULS UNDER THE ALTAR.

How long, O Lord, how long, Thou true and just,  
Thy vengeance lingers, nor fulfils Thy word !  
Thy Martyrs' blood still cries from out the dust,  
How long, O Lord ?

Slaughtered were we of old in many a land,  
By friends betrayed, by enemies abhorred ;  
And yet thou holdest back thy vengeful hand :  
How long, O Lord ?

Stoned, sawn asunder, slain by fire and sword  
Or thrown to lions 'mid th' arena's throng,  
O Christ our God, by highest heaven adored,  
How long, how long ?

Even now thy children faint beneath the rod ;  
 Thy help in vain by prayers and tears implored,  
 And taunting foemen ask, " Where is your God ?"  
 Arise, O Lord !

CHRIST.

The end hath come and I will judge the world  
 In righteousness,—the nations by My truth.

ANGELS.

*(In a great outburst of joy.)*

Hallelujah !  
 For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

THE CHURCH TRIUMPHANT.

We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee,  
 We glorify thee, we give thanks to thee  
 For thy great glory.

ANGELS.

Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ ;  
 Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.

CHURCH TRIUMPHANT.

Therefore with angels and archangels,  
 And with all the company of heaven,

We laud and magnify thy glorious name,  
Evermore praising thee and saying,  
Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts,  
Heaven and earth are full of thy glory.

Then from the church on earth, yet militant,  
Rose into heaven the breathing of a sigh :  
“ Come, Lord Jesus ; come quickly.”

CANTO I.

SCENE : *Earth.*

I looked, and lo ! a city great and fair,  
With palaces and spires and vaulted domes,  
Basked in the sunlight of declining day.  
It lay between two rivers. On the west  
The larger rolled its placid wave due south.  
From the northeast the smaller held its course,  
Rapid and tortuous, to the southern point,  
Where both united swelled into a bay,  
Fit harbor for the navies of a world.  
On every side the city was begirt  
With walls and casemates, towers and bastions  
huge,  
Strongest along the northern, landward side,  
Yet elsewhere rearing a granitic front  
Sheer from the water's edge,—the outline harsh  
Softened and varied in the passing streams,  
That from their crystal surface gave again  
All that o'erhung, so stern and gray with age.  
At all th' embrasures heavy cannon lowered ;  
Upon the battlements the sentry paced ;  
And waving in the gentle summer breeze,

That sighed o'er every loftiest turret there,  
Banners were floating forth with this device—  
A blazing altar and a bleeding lamb ;  
While amid all, conspicuous to the view,  
Shone one that bore the image of a cross  
In gold upon a snow-white silken ground,  
And underneath was written, God is Love.  
Why was it that a silence so profound  
Rested upon this city?—That the streets  
Of the vast mart re-echoed not the sound  
Of human intercourse or industry ?  
Not thus without, where, far as eye could reach,  
A thousand armèd legions were encamped,  
On river-sides, on hills, on spreading plains,  
Their white tents, like the countless fleecy clouds  
Upon the vault of heaven, encompassed earth,—  
Only in martial order justly set,  
Formed into squares, these bordering on streets,  
And thus the whole array ; with plazas broad  
Between the different nations, left for sports  
Of manly strength or warlike exercise.  
Central to each division, high in air,  
Rustled its flag, of many-colored hue,  
Ensign armorial, and escutcheon quaint,  
These too were deftly dight with cruel forms,  
Bears, vultures, serpents, dragons, scorpions.  
Central to all the host a grand marquee,  
Of form unusual, wrought with curious art,  
Dome-like above, whence silken curtains green

In circular dependence hung around,  
Festooned with golden fringes. Through the top  
Shot up a shaft that bore th' imperial flag  
Proudly o'er all the legions. On one side  
A tawny lion couched upon his prey.  
Azure the other where an eagle showed  
On outspread pinions mounting tow'rd the sun.  
Throughout the vast encampment all was life,  
For 't was the hour of martial games and sports.  
Here Asia's sons in rich and flowing garb,  
And robes of brilliant oriental dyes,  
Turbaned and sandaled, like a storm swept by,  
On steeds of Araby fleet as the wind,—  
Lightly careering, poising now the lance,  
Now brandishing their crooked scimitars.  
There Europe's hardier infantry advanced,  
Charged bayonet, retreated, counter-marched,  
Beat back the foe, and won the bloodless field,  
In all the act and pomp of mimic war.  
Beyond, were crowds of Afric's swarthy race,  
In not unseemly, barbarous attire  
Of curious texture, woven dexterously,  
And intertwined with threads and beads of gold.  
These threw the reedy spear, or twanged the  
    bow,—  
Ancestral customs, still in pastime used.  
On such a scene the sun with level beams  
Shone on earth's latest day,—his parting rays  
Flashing along the rows of carabines,



Pikes, lances, bayoneted stands of arms ;  
On trappings rich with gold and burnished steel,  
Tents by the shore and frigates in the bay.  
As a grieved friend departs reluctantly,  
And pauses on the threshold ere he goes,  
So now the God of day a moment hung  
On the horizon's verge, gave one last look  
Of sorrow at th' embannered king of beasts,  
And king of birds above the hostile camp,  
Smiled faintly on the golden cross afar,  
And bade the world adieu, and shut light's pearly  
    gates.

Hark ! from ten thousand cannons' brazen throats  
Thunder the vespers rude of stalwart war,  
Not like the mellow tones of evening bells,  
That tell of hope and faith, of love and heaven,  
And lingering, softening into silence, die.  
Scarce were the echoes laid, when music rose  
From cornets, bugles, cymbals, trumpets, drums,  
And stole o'er river, fortress, field, and grove,  
Harmoniously breathing life away.  
Departed Day, it was thy requiem,  
Losing itself in cloister-like recess,  
Where the far mountains stretched their colon-  
    nade,  
And the gray-hooded hills like friars stood ;  
Or evening song of mother to her child,  
Saying to the wearied earth, " Rest, loved one,  
    rest."

And while the dulcet notes were swelling yet  
Toward the empyrèan, in the east  
The full moon floated up from out the sea,  
Like some fair spirit woke by music's spell.

CANTO II.

SCENE : *The City.*

It was a temple of the living God,  
Of venerable air and grand design,  
Where met that night a band of warlike men,  
And underneath the light of graceful lamps  
And chandeliers wide-flaming, bowed in prayer.  
The gray-haired Richmond's voice alone was  
heard

In supplication o'er the kneeling throng.  
Prayer's eloquence was there, the hush of awe,  
Love's holy warmth, entreaty's tenderness,  
From the deep, sacred fountains of the heart.  
And as they rose from lowliest attitude,  
'T was with the countenance and look of men  
In stern extremity, but not despair.  
Now for a space they all in silence sat,  
As though in doubt what action to advise.  
Ashley at length,—of mild, engaging mien,  
And features where benignity reposed,—  
Bespake them thus :

“ Fathers and Brethren dear,  
Yet most beloved in danger's darkest hour,

Ye see our state,—beset on every side,  
Environed and beleaguered by the foe,  
Whose squadrons stretch beyond the utmost  
sight  
Of sentries posted on our highest towers.  
Three sorties have been made at dead of night ;  
Three desperate attempts to pierce the ranks  
Of our dire enemy,—all, all repulsed.  
Our shipping is destroyed, and—worst of all—  
Hollow-eyed Famine stares us in the face.  
It was but yesterday I overheard  
A little child beg piteously for bread.  
I saw the mother with a burst of grief  
Clasp the sweet sufferer to her aching heart.  
And this is the beginning of our woe.  
The end I hardly dare to look upon,  
Even in thought ; the dread reality  
Who of us can behold and ask to live ?  
Our wives and children wasting day by day,  
And perishing with hunger's fearful death !  
Sinking with torture lingering and slow,  
And, in their latest moments, thrusting forth  
Their long and bony fingers as to clutch  
Food, which unreachd, they die with maniac  
scream,  
And frenzied stare that pleads in vain for help.  
'T is this that leads me to the advice I give,  
That on the morrow we capitulate.

As for myself I do not fear to die.

Has e'er my heart in hottest combat failed,  
Or cheek turned pale in deadliest assault?  
Yet there are those for whom all hearts must feel.  
Shall we delay? Then, Famine, do thy work;  
And when our strength is gone, perchance the foe,  
Gaining an easy entrance o'er the walls,  
Will wreak their wrath, long-hoarded, on our  
heads.

Can it be wise in us t' exasperate,  
Whom we can neither conquer nor resist?  
Whose overwhelming numbers are too strong  
For all the prowess of our thinning ranks?  
Now,—if we open wide the city gates,—  
May it not be that woman's feebleness,  
And the heart-moving cries of tender babes,  
Shall claim escape from them, though not for us?  
Who knows but that some feature, word, or tone  
Of our beloved ones may serve to wake  
A memory in the bosoms of the foe,  
Of mother, wife, or daughter far away?  
Or tear, or winning smile on childhood's face,  
Whisper to them that they too have a home?  
Men are not wholly fiends until they pass  
Away from earth: There still remain some sparks  
Of natural affection in their breasts;  
A little light of love, unquenched as yet,  
By the dark stream that hurries them to hell.

I offer then myself, to go alone  
 Or with two others, to the hostile camp,  
 And bear the city keys at risk of death."

Scarce had he ended when Dubois sprang up,—  
 In gesture, bearing, look, a soldier all :  
 "Not such is my advice. If in a word  
 I should embody all I feel, 't would be  
 'To arms!' Why do these bloodhounds seek our  
 lives?

What have we done to rouse their cruel hate?  
 Why do they thus pursue us unto death?  
 From country unto country, land to land,  
 Till now at last within one city's walls  
 All are contained that fear the name of God.  
 Do they not know that ev'n the timid deer  
 That pants and flies before the yelping pack  
 While it may hope t' escape, will turn at length  
 And desperately charge its enemy?  
 We are the hunted; we too are at bay;  
 And we are warned not to exasperate  
 These demons lest they slay our wives and babes!  
 'They may be merciful.' Hear it, ye heavens!  
 Yes, when the wolf has mercy on the lamb,  
 That unresisting trembles at his feet,  
 Yes, when the hawk compassionates the dove,  
 Or tiger weeps above a dying fawn.  
 Spare them? It may be; for the food of lust.  
 But no,—for lust hath not its seat so deep

In human hearts, as the wild thirst for blood.  
Sweet is the face of childhood, sweet the smile  
That plays on features all unworn by care.  
But to these miscreants sweeter were the shriek  
Of frantic mothers when they saw their babes  
Torn from their arms and brained against the  
wall.

God help me! when such thoughts as these  
obtain

Supremacy within me, for the time  
I sorely fear that I am none of His.  
But to proceed. The enemy surround  
Our last fond refuge. Wearied now with arms,  
And the rude shock of battle,—well aware  
That famine soon our forces must consume,  
They give themselves to godless merriment,  
To games by day, and revelry by night:  
Such the report now brought us by our spies.  
Our course of action seems to me most clear,  
That at some hour between the noon of night  
And break of day, when deepest slumber wraps  
The world in wizard mantle, when the noise  
Of latest revellers is hushed in sleep,  
Then we shall burst in terror on their camp,  
With the loud crash of musketry, the roar  
Of cannon, blare of trumpets, and the shout  
Of legions pouring o'er the gory field.  
Perhaps Jehovah, God of Israel,  
May send a panic to the inmost heart

Of our fierce adversaries. Sudden fear  
May seize them. In the terror and the night,  
Each individual struggling for himself,  
They may put one another to the sword.  
If not, let us at least like soldiers fall,  
Fall sword in hand. Let us not die like fools,  
Bound hand and foot, and on a gallows hanged.  
For such would be the gentle Ashley's lot,  
And mine and yours, whoever lead the host.  
Thinkest thou, Ashley, that thine honored name,  
Valor in field and wisdom in debate,  
Are all unknown among yon motley crew?  
For thee, for us the halter is designed,  
If once we fall into the foemen's hands.  
My offer is to follow or to lead  
In one last, bold attack upon our foes.  
To conquer or to perish, be our aim;  
And may the God of battles aid our arms."

---

He said. A murmur of applause was heard.  
There were, whose hauds were laid upon their  
swords.  
But now the aged Richmond slowly rose:  
"Not so, my brother, doth it us behoove  
To carry on our war, and so forget  
The words of counsel by our Captain given.  
Man's wrath works not the righteousness of God.



Vengeance is His alone ; He will repay.  
There is a just and lawful sense of wrong ;  
An indignation, we may rightly feel ;  
But let us keep our anger in due bounds,  
Lest the fair breeze, that drives the gallant ship  
Along its foamy way, become a storm,  
And rend, and wreck, and then engulf our  
bark.

We are exhorted ' sword in hand to fall.'  
I am content to die, as God appoints ;  
And yet if I might choose, I would not spend  
Life's closing hour upon a battle-field.  
The yells of fiendish rage, the clash of arms,  
The shouts of living, groans of dying men,  
The fire, the smoke, the blood, would ill prelude  
The peace and love and melody of heaven.  
No, to die fitly we do not require  
Such time or place, such scene or circumstance.  
Nay more, there is a greatness of the soul  
That doth transcend the power of outward  
things,  
And is sublime amid the scoff and scorn  
And execration of a rabble throng.  
So died the sinless One ; and Oh, had we  
More of His Spirit, that we too might say  
' Father, forgive ! they know not what they  
do.'  
Placed as we are, our duty manifest  
Is to defend our children, wives, and selves.

The law of self-defence is plainly writ  
Both in the Scriptures and the heart of man.  
From all that we have seen, we cannot hope  
That our inveterate foe will spare. No cry  
For mercy ever yet has reached his heart.  
A night attack is, then, our last resource.  
But let us wait until the enemy  
Are not so vigilant as seem they now ;  
Till they are lost to reason, steeped in wine,  
O'erwhelmed with surfeiting and drunkenness.  
Then with a desperate valor let us hurl  
Our shot and shell upon them, hot and fast.  
Meanwhile, what may not Heaven do for us ?  
A strong persuasion grows upon my mind,  
That we behold the latest days of earth.  
The end draws nigh, by prophets long foretold.  
Of all the prophecies of Holy Writ,  
Recorded for the Church's faith and hope,  
None else remain unravelled, unfulfilled,  
Save what respect the grand catastrophe.  
The great red Dragon, stinging scorpions,  
Lion-mouthed Leopard rising from the sea,  
Monstrous with many heads and many horns ;  
Woman, in royal purple well attired,  
And decked with gold and pearls and precious  
stones ;  
Angels with sounding trumpets ; falling stars ;  
Whatever type or shadow was portrayed  
By those old Masters on the sacred page,—

All, all have found their substance and their  
truth

In wars, convulsions, potentates, and powers.

Nations are born and die. The word of God

Liveth for aye,—abideth evermore.

Only one mystery is unresolved,

The final coming of the Son of Man.

Behold He comes in clouds, and every eye

Shall see Him, and all kindreds of the earth

Shall wail when they behold Him in the sky.

Welcome the darkness that enshrouds our state

In deepening gloom. But few more hours shall  
be

Struck on Time's sounding bell before we hear

The Midnight Cry, 'Behold, the Bridegroom  
comes!'

What if this very night that cry were made?

What if the King of Glory from His throne

Should with the heavenly train so soon appear?"

Scarce was this said, when lo! a sudden light,

Brighter than noonday's sun, shone overhead;

And on their snowy pinions poised aloft,

A band of angels sang:

“Ye sons of men,

Shout, leap for joy, for your redemption's nigh.

Before to-morrow's dawn shall ye behold

The Prince of Glory in the clouds of heaven.”

## ITHURIEL.

Forth from the regions where day never dieth,  
 Fort from the verdure that knows not decay,  
 Swifter than arrow unseen as it flieth,  
 Swifter than light have we sped on our way.

Forth from the radiance first-born and elysian,  
 Through the star-spaces we 've held on our  
 flight,  
 Now in the splendors that dazzled our vision,  
 Now in the gloom and the terror of night.

## ANGELS.

Yet Thou art with us wherever we rove,  
 God of all wisdom, all power, all love.

## ITHURIEL.

Not unto shepherds their night watches keeping,  
 Come we to chant o'er Judea's dark plain ;  
 Not with the tidings of babe sadly weeping,  
 Or tenderly soothed to his slumbers again.

But of the pomp of a Warrior victorious,  
 Leading invincible armies, we tell,  
 Saving the lowly with grace ever glorious,  
 Grinding to powder the forces of hell.

ANGELS.

Thus it becomes Thee in grandeur to move,  
God of all vengeance, all terror, all love.

ITHURIEL.

Bright on His head shines the crown of dominion,  
Sparkles His sceptre, and flashes His sword ;  
Mighty archangels with wide-spreading pinion  
Marshal their forces, and wait on His word.

From trump and falchion lightnings are glancing ;  
'Round helm and banner the red fires play,  
While at the summons the squadrons advancing  
Form into order of battle array.

ANGELS.

God of all majesty, mercy, and power,  
Strengthen man's heart in this terrible hour.

This said, they straightway vanished from the  
place,  
Leaving the men bewildered and in fear,  
But Richmond presently stood forth, and thus  
Addressed them :

“ Not so soon, beloved ones,  
Thought I the end would come. This very  
night !

Ah ! who that awful presence can abide ?  
 Who dauntless stand before the judgment seat ?  
 Searcher of hearts, O prove and try our thoughts,  
 Ere yet th' alarum ring its pealing notes,  
 And now let each to his own dwelling go,  
 And every soul prepare to meet his God."

Softly and slowly, one by one they went.  
 The lights all died away, till fretted vault,  
 Column, and arch were wrapped in dusky folds.  
 Nought could be seen, except th' unsteady gleam  
 Of straggling moonbeams dimly peering through  
 The tall and traceried windows' rich-dyed glass,  
 Falling on pillar, aisle, and sombre wall,  
 In varied tints and strange, fantastic forms.  
 Nought could be heard but the clock's measured  
 tick

Counting the moments, while Eternity—  
 As some magician old, gray-bearded, grim,  
 Bending o'er couch of infant young and fair—  
 Held finger on the dying pulse of Time.

Richmond approached his home. A pleasant  
 spot :  
 The modest mansion, the embowering trees  
 Waving their branches in the nightly air,  
 And weaving shadows on the smooth green  
 sward ;  
 The vine-wreathed trellis,—all a picture made,

That memory might, ah ! shall forever hold.  
He paused an instant at the gate to take  
One last look at the dear old place, his home,  
Scene of his tranquil joys and sorrows blest.  
A rising tear bedimmed his aged eyes,  
When on his ear a sweet voice softly stole.

Not upon the mountains only,  
Nor on castle turrets high  
Streams the precious light of heaven  
Through the portals of the sky.

But on lowly vales sequestered  
Where the brook flows noiselessly,  
And on cottages half-hidden  
Underneath the linden tree.

Not to lofty heroes only,  
Sages learnèd, men of might,  
Monarchs robed in gold and purple,  
Comes the true, the heavenly light.

There are hearts that long and meekly  
Suffer, to the world unknown ;  
Humble ones, the God of glory  
Stoops to claim you for His own.

When the sun is clothed in sackcloth,  
When yon moon to blood doth turn,

When in final conflagration  
All this spacious globe shall burn ;

When above th' august tribunal  
Quick and dead Thy face shall see,  
Can a feeble, trembling maiden  
Hope to be confessed by Thee ?

Yes, for once Thy head reclining  
On a mother's bosom lay,  
And the tender lips of woman  
Kissed Thine infant tears away.

Beamed upon Thee in Thy cradle  
Mary's eyes with lustre mild ;  
'T was her voice in gentle accents  
Whispered : " Sweetly rest, my child ! "

Not the highest heaven's glory  
Can that memory remove ;  
On Thy cheek those kisses linger,  
In Thy heart that mother's love.

She ceased, and Richmond entered hurriedly.  
Hearing his hasty step, Evangeline  
Came forth and met her father in the hall.  
The aged man fell on her neck and wept.  
" My daughter, O my daughter ! " thus he spoke,



When he found utterance. "How soon must this  
 Thy precious faith, as gold, be tried by fire?  
 How soon shall we and all His followers be  
 In the celestial mansions with our Lord?  
 Thy mother too —" But here the tears afresh  
 Ran down the time-worn furrows of his face;—  
 "Long lost, belovèd wife, but now restored,  
 No more to weep, no more to faint and die."  
 "How? what? my father," said Evangeline;  
 "Whence this unwonted tumult in thy breast?  
 My mother? Now restored?"

Her father then :

"Evangeline, a band of angels came  
 This night, and to our wondering ears announced  
 The coming of the Son of God from heaven."  
 She fell upon her knees. "Aye, watch and pray,  
 If ever thou wouldst watch and pray on earth."  
 He said no more, but left her kneeling there,  
 With her meek eyes devoutly raised to heaven.

---

It is a quiet chamber. Here is stored  
 In long and comely rows the lore of time.  
 Learning hath often lit her early lamp  
 Within these walls, where spoils of other days  
 And distant climes are gathered; knowledge  
     high,  
 And eloquence of poetry and prose,  
 And modern science by whose regal power  
 Man holds supremacy o'er land and sea.

The page of History unfolded tells  
Of vice and virtue, emperors and kings,  
Empires and kingdoms, states and common-  
wealths ;  
Of wise and great, profound and valiant men,  
And women mighty in their loveliness ;  
Of famines, tumults, pestilences, wars,  
Whereby the leaves are blackened and begrimed,  
And many stuck together fast with blood ;  
While Sibyl whispers her traditions dire,  
Or, laying finger on her lips, is dumb.  
But chief the works of greatly pious men,  
The consecrated learning of the good,  
Whose very names are watchwords ; holy thought ;  
Manful repulse of treacherous assault  
On God's blest word, or on the cross of Christ ;  
Copious wisdom fresh from heavenly founts ;  
And over all, the Book inspired of God,  
The highest stepping-stone by which to reach  
The Pure, the True, the Beautiful, the Good—  
One rapid glance at these his treasures rich,  
Prized above gold or gems. Forgive a sigh,  
That all must perish in devouring flames.  
“ Farewell ! companions of my earthly days,”—  
So thought he in that moment passing fleet ;  
“ Guides of my youth, friends of my manhood's  
prime ;  
Solace in sorrow's hour ; in weakness, strength ;  
Honor and ornament of prosperous years.

But ah ! I have no time for such regrets.  
 Farewell ! O Earth, that gavest birth to me,—  
 Earth, where the Saviour lived, where Jesus died,  
 And where He lay, as I had hoped to lie,  
 In thy fond bosom sheltered from the blast.  
 Farewell, each sacred, each familiar spot,  
 Scenes of my toils and conflicts, hopes and fears.  
 Farewell, ye trees and flowers, ye hills and dales ;  
 Farewell, day's glory, and the calm of night,  
 And all that to my being links itself  
 In ties that can be broken nevermore."

---

The vine-leaves quiver in the nightly breeze,  
 Which, passing through them, fans an aged brow ;  
 And tremblingly the moonbeams enter there.  
 Draw reverently nigh,—a good man prays.

" Ancient of days ! Most high, most holy Lord !  
 Lonely wayfarer of eternity !  
 Of old Thou walkedst in Thy Godhood's might  
 Coming from out the gloom unlimited,  
 Unknown, unfathomed save by Thee alone ;  
 Into the future holding now Thy way,  
 That long eternity which I shall know ;  
 Spirit unseen whose keenly piercing eye  
 Scanneth each thought of every human heart,  
 How can a guilty worm before Thee stand ;  
 When in Thy sight the heavens are unclean,  
 And in Thy presence loftiest cherubim

Cry ' Holy, Holy, Holy God of Hosts ? '  
Can I, a wretched sinner, dare appear  
Before Thy bar ? Can I confront that gaze,  
Which singles me from out the countless throng,  
And says ' O why hast thou against Me sinned ? '  
What could I do, ' Thou Judge of all the earth !  
Ah ! whither look, or whither turn to flee !  
But that Thy love is deeper than my guilt,  
And Thou art He that wept and bled for man.  
Grant me, O Christ, to stand so near, that I  
May see the face that once was wet with blood,  
And mark the print of iron spike and spear  
Still visible in hands and feet and side.  
So without fear may I approach Thy throne,  
And claim to be a sinner saved by grace.

Thou lovest me ! Who could this truth believe,  
Did not Thy Spirit witness to his heart ?  
Who comprehend the length and breadth and  
height,  
Until the light from heaven had dawned thereon  
As day upon th' illimitable sea.  
Yet with that witness, that supernal ray,  
I can, I do unfalteringly repose  
On Thy sole promise, wondering at myself.  
Whence is this peace ? for I could not have  
thought  
Such calmness possible at this last hour.  
For why do not the darkness, thunders, fires,

Tempests, convulsions, cries and groans of men,—  
 All which I presently must see and hear,—  
 Now daunt my soul as they were wont to do?  
 How canst Thou, Lord, so strengthen feeble  
 man

To stand without dismay upon the verge  
 Of earth that slips from underneath his feet?

O God of matchless power, how wise, how deep  
 Thy purposes far-reaching! Who hath known  
 Thy will, or who hath been Thy counsellor?  
 Or who can tell why Thou hast chosen man  
 To worship in the temple of the sky?  
 Were these the themes whereon Thy Godhead  
 mused,

During th' eternal, uncreative past?  
 When thou existedst and nought else beside,  
 Nor worshipper was found in all of space,  
 Nor Time its giddy cycles had begun.  
 Viewing our fallen race, didst Thou design  
 A mercy such as none but God could show?  
 Saviour of sinners, did Thy pitying heart  
 Throb with that love, no other heart could feel?  
 Before Thy vision did Thy sorrow rise,  
 Thy life of grief, of weariness, of pain,  
 Thy mortal agony, Thy death of blood?"

He said thus much, and rose from off his knees,  
 To pace the floor in meditation rapt.

“ What is that change, O wonder-working God,  
That soon shall pass upon my mortal frame ?  
How shall this weakness be exchanged for  
strength,

This mortal put on immortality ?  
Shall I be young again ? And shall these eyes,  
Now dim with age, renew their strength and fire ?  
These hoary hairs resume their youthful hue,  
And I walk forth in manhood’s early prime ?  
O Life, that dwellest in the Son of God,  
A little while and thou too shalt be mine.  
I shall be like Thee, Thou transfigured Christ,—  
Be strong to bear the glory Thou shalt bring.

Friends of my childhood, and my riper years,  
Who long have slumbered in the silent tomb,  
Hear the loud clarion and awake from sleep !  
Awake ! and put undying vigor on.  
Ye that have known corruption’s foulest stains,  
Rise, and be clad with beauty and with grace.  
The hour, by prophets long foretold, is here,  
And He shall come, the Beautiful, the Strong.

Can it be true, or is it all a dream,  
That I shall be forever with the Lord ?  
O God, I thank Thee ! Let these tears of joy,  
And inarticulate sobs express to Thee,  
That which lies not within the power of words.  
Forever and forever ! Glorious thought,

That I, a creature but of yesterday,  
Numbering life's fleeting moments by the beat  
Of pulse, or day and night's succession swift,  
Should revel in the view of endless years,  
Draw largely, yet diminish not the store,  
Mount, soar, and still the mighty prospect find  
Too broad for human or angelic eye,  
Thy love too vast for creature heart to hold."

He paused, and, going to his cabinet,  
Took out a relic from a secret drawer,  
A paper written by a woman's hand,—  
The long-lost mother of *Evangeline* ;—  
Then sat him down and read the *Vesper Hymn*.

" While the shades of night descending  
With the light of day are blending,  
To the love that knows no ending,  
Lord, we turn ; O hear our humble prayer.

Eyes that once were dim with weeping,  
Now from highest heaven keeping  
O'er the flock a watch unsleeping,  
Rest, O rest on us with tender care.

To Thy will our spirits molding,  
To Thy heart Thy loved ones folding,  
All our helplessness beholding,  
Son of God, O hear our humble prayer."

Evangeline now quietly stole in,  
And knelt beside her venerable sire,  
Clasped her fair palms across his aged knee,  
And leaned her sweet young cheek upon her  
    hands,  
Waiting the trumpet that should wake the dead.



CANTO III.

SCENE : *The Camp.*

What was transacted meanwhile in the camp,  
Comes next in order to relate. The sound  
Of bugles, cornets, drums, and cymbals ceased ;  
And over all the field the kindling fires  
First sent up clouds of smoke, then burst in  
flames  
Curling and blazing 'twixt the rustic logs.  
The ruddy, cheerful gleams lit up each group  
Surrounding, who, with half-averted face,  
Brought meats of different kinds from stall and  
fold,  
From copse and field ; some borne in single hand,  
Others of ponderous weight,—whole beasts im-  
paled,—  
To turn and roast on monstrous iron spits ;  
The sturdy foremen, shouting their commands,  
All red, and bustling with important step.  
Round the hot centres, or in ranges long,  
Ovens were baking bread, of wheat or maize,  
Rye, barley, fruit of arto-carpus tree ;  
And in huge pots simmered the boiling rice,

The food of half mankind. In the hard earth  
Holes had been scooped, and tawny men thereat,  
From the far islands of the Southern Sea,  
Primeval usage plied, part heating stones  
To put in them, part sorting out the leaves  
To line the sides and bottoms of the pits,  
Wherein swine, fish, or fowl should be bestowed.  
Before the tent doors or from wagon trains  
The commissaries equal rations dealt  
To clamoring men that hurried to and fro.  
Hard by the fires, barrels of water dripped,  
Which women's hands were dipping out in cups,  
And bearing thence, filled caldrons, under which  
Twigs crackled sharp, or smouldered ashy coals.  
Sergeants along the outer lines relieved  
The weary guards, and sentinels detailed ;  
Each, as he took his station, marching slow,  
With sabre broad and heavy at his side,  
And rifled musket with fixed bayonet.  
Superior officers strolled arm in arm,  
Sauntering by twos and threes along their way,  
Marked by their dress and nameless lofty port ;  
Or stood conversing with that courtesy  
Ever habitual to men of arms.  
Now evening's meal was ended, and the time  
For mirthful sports and revelries came on.  
The mellow notes of flutes and violins  
Lured to the dance ; not stately minuets,  
But fun and frolic cheered by noisy glee ;

And woman's voice was heard, her step was  
seen

Footing it nimbly o'er the smooth-worn ground.  
Here in the light fandango, gay and free,  
To sound of castanets and tambourines,  
Lover and lass disported pantomime.  
The one advanced ; the other fled, then stopped,  
And, archly looking back, besought pursuit ;  
Darted away again, eluded, skimmed  
Birdlike the borders of th' applauding ring,  
And featly let herself be caught at last,  
'Mid smiles and cheers and gifts of showering  
coin.

Beyond in graver sort sat turbaned men,  
On mats and cushions spread upon the grass ;  
In circles ranged, with oriental pipes  
Of amber mouthpiece, long and flexile stem,  
And self-supporting bowl of curious make,  
From which the smoke came bubbling up through  
cups

Filled with perfumes from Araby, the Blest,  
Rose from their lips and fragrance faint dispensed  
Of aromatic gums, in a blue cloud  
That seemed by moonlight an enchanter's veil ;  
The while they listened to some tale of eld,  
Of long-remembered Haroun, viziers, ghouls,  
Sultans, and robbers, hunch-backs, genii, dwarfs,  
Caverns and neverfailing gems and gold.

Next these, the children of the farther East,—

Lands where the Ind and Ganges pour their  
floods,—  
Gathered in clusters variously engaged ;  
To one of which thus sang a dark-haired girl,  
Playing the while upon a silver lute.

## I.

Sons of India, list, while I tell you a tale of the  
Triad.  
Vishnu ages ago lay sleeping under the Ocean,  
Up from his bosom there shot a stalk that was  
slender and graceful,  
And at the top of the stem a lotus unfolded its  
glory.

## II.

Out of the gorgeous flower sprang Brahma and  
stood on the waters,  
Looking to North and to South, to East and to  
West o'er the broad sea.  
No one appearing in sight anywhere, in ecstasy  
Brahma  
Clapped his hands and shouted for joy, " Yes, I  
am the First-born ! "

## III.

“ First of all to exist, and maker of all that shall follow,—  
All excepting this lotus. But hold ! ” He dived  
into the water,  
Glided adown the stalk of the flower, as swift as  
the whirlwind,  
Till he arrived at the bottom, and found the slum-  
bering Vishnu.

## IV.

“ Who art thou, knave? And what dost thou  
here? Arouse thee, O sleeper ! ”  
Vishnu awoke, and proudly exclaimed he, “ I am  
the First-born.”  
“ Liest thou, knave, in thy throat ; for I was be-  
fore thee,” said Brahma.  
Vishnu leaped to his feet. Then began the first  
of all battles.

## V.

Long time wrestled the twain, till at last the  
divine Mahá Deva  
Rushed in between them to end their strife, and  
thrust them asunder,  
Saying, “ In vain is your contest, for I myself am  
the First-born.

Natheless will I resign my claim to him who shall  
mount up  
Through the empyreal heights, and the crown of  
my head shall discover ;  
Or unto him who shall sound the abyss, and look  
on my sandals."

## VI.

Brahma then flashed aloft, outstripping the flight  
of an eagle ;  
Upward and upward he flew, till his pinions were  
weary with flying.  
Still towered up far above him the head of the  
great Mahá Deva,  
Then he bethought him of guile, and created the  
first of the white cows ;

## VII.

Brought her to Deva, and said, "I have seen it ;  
this cow is my witness."  
"Liars !" exclaimed the angry Deva, "Yes, both  
of you liars !  
Brahma, to thee no rites be performed, no sacrifice  
offered ;  
Mouth of kine, be foul evermore, and the cause  
of defilement."

## VIII.

Then rose Vishnu, and said, "I saw not thy feet,  
Mahá Deva."  
"True is thy word," quoth Deva, "and thou  
Vishnu art the First-born,  
First of the Gods ! unto thee shall be rendered the  
loftiest honors,  
Temples be built, and prayers be addressed  
through all generations."

---

Elsewhere stood serpent-charmers wrapped in  
folds  
Of venomous reptiles, which the looker-on  
Gazed at amazed, and held his breath for fear ;  
Sagacious dogs, goats, horses, mountebanks,  
Jugglers with cards and mirrors, balls and swords,  
In open field or tent, as seemed them best ;  
Saloons where liquors in decanters shone ;  
These and a thousand other toys and sports  
Made up the scene of vain and motley life,  
While ever and anon o'er all arose  
Music in outburst wild, tumultuous,—  
In melancholy cadence died away.

CANTO IV.

*Seymour.*

There were who relished not this noisy glee ;  
Of whom, some sauntered 'neath the spreading  
trees

Along the river's margin, just beyond  
The range of cannon from the city walls ;  
Some rowed in skiffs and yawls with muffled oars,  
That nothing might disturb the heavenly calm.  
But chief a mimic fleet of lengthened train  
Floated adown the stream. Here men of rank,  
Brilliant with decorations, orders, stars,  
And women fair and graceful, dark and proud.  
Hark ! from the foremost boat a voice is heard,  
Accompanied by flutes and mandolins.

I.

Maid, whose eyes with liquid beam  
Show like pearls from depth of stream,  
Look but thus on me forever  
Gliding down this placid river,  
By its softly wooded shore ;  
Grant me this,—I ask no more.



## II.

Give me moonlight, beauty's daughter,  
On this wide and limpid water ;  
Let the melody of song  
Echo far and linger long,  
Mingling with the splash of oar,  
Just as now ; I ask no more.

## III.

Bid thy ringlets all astray  
With the night-air gently play ;  
Take my willing hand in thine,  
Tell me that thy heart is mine ;  
I desire no greater bliss,  
Ask no higher heaven than this.

---

Now at head-quarters beat the loud tattoo ;  
Ten thousand drums took up the rapid roll,  
East Indian tom-toms, and harsh Chinese gongs.  
At once the lights went out in lesser tents,  
And, wearied with the active games of day,  
The common soldiers to their cots retired  
By little companies. The multitude  
Thinned off ; the roar of constant hubbub hushed ;

And only here and there, at intervals,  
 A casual shout of merriment was heard,  
 Or yell of drunken men that homeward reeled.  
 But dissipation was not wholly checked,  
 For at this hour the grand marquee began  
 To blaze with lights from newly kindled lamps  
 Hung in a circle round the central shaft.  
 Beneath, a table, set in manner like,  
 Held long and slender bottles filled with wine,  
 And cups of gold and silver richly chased.  
 Here sat the highest officers by land  
 In wassail high with admirals of the sea,  
 And wine and wit in rival currents flowed.  
 Seymour appeared the gayest of the gay,  
 Whose deep-blue eyes, and curling chestnut  
 hair

Falling upon his shoulders, handsome mouth,  
 And gallant manners won him woman's love  
 Where'er he went. Crimson his uniform  
 Turned up with buff. Before him was a cup  
 Poised on a column claret-hued and bronzed.  
 "Ho ! Seymour," cried an entering admiral ;  
 "Thou 'rt here betimes to-night. Was 't thou I  
 heard

An hour ago, as floating down the wave  
 A sentimental ditty caught my ear ?"  
 "To a chaste maiden, valorous Van Tromp ?"  
 Seymour replied ; " Ah ! my dear admiral,  
 What ditties must we sing to such fair prudes !"

VAN TROMP.

I knew it was no other voice than thine.  
How now, my friend, what new toy hast thou  
there?

SEYMOUR.

Toy? By the gods, it is the rarest bowl  
That ever graced our board. 'T is Vinton's  
make.

VAN TROMP.

Vinton's?

SEYMOUR.

Aye; "crazy George" they call him now,  
Because his wits are addled—so they say.  
Who knows if he be more of fool or knave?  
He must have had some lucid moments when  
This piece was wrought.

VAN TROMP.

Is 't wood or porcelain?

SEYMOUR.

Better than either, sir. It is a skull,  
So small, translucent, smooth and finely grained,

Some noble damsel must have owned it once,  
And borne it loftily. Look at this train,  
Bacchus returning from the vintage, crowned ;  
His chariot draped with vines and drawn by  
girls.

See that blue sky reflected in the lake,  
Those purple grapes, that thyrsus ivy-wreathed,  
And girlhood's delicately carmined cheek.  
The god of wine,—how exquisite his leer,  
His sidelong glance, and half-shut sleepy eyes ;  
While from the goblet, reeling in his hand,  
Gushes the crimson juice. We almost hear  
The creaking wheels, the peasant's vintage song,  
And feel the warm rays of the setting sun.

To whom, Van Tromp : “ In truth, it is a gem.  
That Vinton is a genius in his way.”

“ The best part is unseen,” Seymour replied,  
“ Except by those who from the vessel drink.  
The inside—you may see thus much—is lined  
With porcelain, on which the brush has put  
A form of beauty, earth but seldom sees.  
O raven hair ! O eyes of utter Night !  
Of blackest Night, that answers back to Night ;  
Cheeks that out-vie the tints of snowy heights  
Blushing beneath the kisses of the sun.  
O figure robed in laces soft and white,  
No vestal virgin ever showed more fair !  
That background see, of pale and tender green

Deep'ning to olive. From her dainty feet,  
Shadows of dusky red that die in browns,  
Give but an air of substance to what else  
Might seem the misty pageant of a dream,  
Ye gods, if I were Jupiter himself,  
I'd part with high Olympus, thunders, throne,  
Nectar and all, for such a maid as this.  
Now mark ! whoever deepest drains the bowl,  
Is blest with fullest view of beauty's queen.  
Spirit, whate'er thou art, that mak'st thy home  
In sky, in earth, in sea, in lovely woman,—  
The Priestess of thine oracle is Wine.  
The Paphian Venus rose from out the foam,  
That surged in creamy breakers on the isle ;  
But this, more sweet, more charming, rises up  
Out of the sparkling waves of ruby wine.  
Comrades, if I in battle hap to fall,  
I charge you put my skull in Vinton's hands."  
"One question," said Van Tromp, "may I inquire  
Whose skull it was, if thou perchance dost know."  
Seymour looked down ; a faint blush overspread  
His youthful countenance ; but rallying  
He said : "Why dost thou ask, my good Van  
Tromp ?  
Ah me ! what wicked tales are told on one.  
Sad, sad ! I own I've been a naughty youth.  
Hast heard the story of 'The Broken Heart' ?  
What, no ? well 't is too long to tell just now ;—  
All about love and folly, sin and woe.

Faith, what a mighty sermon I could preach  
Upon that text ! A dagger at the last  
Let out the blood o'ercharged upon her heart.  
Heav'n knows I sorrowed o'er that graceless  
thrust ;

But what was to be done ? I did the best  
Within my power and wit. The body lies  
Embalmed in costliest style by latest art.  
The head alone has cost me three months' pay,  
And here it is before you. I desired  
To keep some relic to assuage my grief.  
And then the dagger,—that too I retain.  
Its jewelled handle, long and piercing blade,  
May serve me yet if I grow tired of life.  
To say the truth, she was a charming girl,  
And if there were a God, I 'd on my knees  
To crave forgiveness. Smile not, for I would.  
But who comes now ? Welcome, thou great Bel-  
mont,

Wisest in council, bravest in the field ;  
And thou, my Walton, second in command.  
We had begun to think thou wert as mad  
As Vinton, only in a quiet way.  
It seems an age since thou hast deigned to join  
In harmless merry-making, feast, or rout  
Now that thou 'st left 'the doldrums,' as Van  
Tromp

Would naughtily, yet nautically say,  
Pray tell us why thy face has been so long,  
Thy gait so moping, and thy tongue so still ? ”

To whom then Walton : " Seymour, it is true,  
I have appeared unhappy, have been sad ;  
Intolerable weight of anguish has  
Oppressed my mind ; but now all that is gone."

SEYMOUR.

Well said, my Walton ! Welcome thrice, to-  
night.

WALTON.

Seymour, I thought it best to come once more,  
Though prudence might have urged another  
course.

SEYMOUR.

Only once more ? Not once ! A thousand  
times.

" No," Walton said ; " I never can return."

SEYMOUR.

Why, that 's a dark enigma ! Thou hast been  
One of our boldest, gayest, brightest souls.  
But more of this to-morrow ; for, to-night,  
I have a vow upon my conscience laid,  
A solemn duty, brethren, to perform ;  
Namely, to christen this good head within,  
Which outwardly has never known the rite :

Christen it not with water, but with wine.

(*He fills the skull from a flagon.*)

Here, pass the goblets, fill to th' very brim,  
And let me do the honors with a toast :

" *Perdition to the Christians.*"

All obeyed,  
And willingly the sparkled bumpers tossed,  
Save Walton, who with aspect sorrowful  
And folded arms, in moody silence sat.  
Seymour was touched ; the color mounted high  
On cheek and forehead, but he checked his  
wrath.

" Cheer up, good Walton, thou art not thy-  
self,

Nor hast been, since we bore the flag of truce  
Into the city and their chieftains saw.  
Of all their leaders there is none to fear  
So much as Richmond. He shall surely die  
If ever he but fall into our hands.  
But then his daughter whom I had designed  
All for mine own,—Evangeline, her name,—  
A fair-haired, blue-eyed, finely modelled sylph.  
Come, Walton, brighten up, she shall be thine,  
If that some brutal soldier slay her not.  
I will surpass the leader of the Greeks,  
And yield Achilles his Briseis dear.  
I fear she may be found a little wan,  
Unless this siege be shortened in some way."



At this rude onset Walton's face 'gan glow  
 With crimson, and a soldier's fire lit up  
 His down-cast eyes, but he spoke not a word.  
 Belmont, observing this, to Seymour said,  
 "Thou shouldst not grieve our Walton in this  
 style,

Who from his recent melancholy seems  
 Somewhat restored. Pray, choose another theme.  
 Monteith, what news of public interest  
 Hast heard since yesternight?"

"Nothing quite new,"

Replied the chief commander's aid-de-camp.

"I hear re-affirmations from the guards  
 Nearest the city. Stoutly they maintain,  
 That in the deepest, stillest dead of night  
 They do behold upon the city walls  
 Walking, in state gigantic, warders strange,  
 Chiefly what time the sinking moon in th' west  
 Casteth her baleful, wizard light aslant.  
 Last night one bolder than the rest stole near  
 Under the cover of projecting rocks,  
 And says he saw what made his blood run cold.  
 Hence all the soldiers beg to be released  
 From sentry duty there. The bravest men  
 Say they are willing to face flesh and blood  
 But know not how these spectres to engage,  
 'Gainst whom no mortal weapon will avail."

Whereat Belmont: "Methought the ghostly  
 reign

Of anile superstition had gone by.  
 Either the men are wearied with the siege  
 And hence their picket duty wish to shirk ;  
 Or else their drowsy eyes and stupid wits  
 Fashion them giants, gorgons, monsters grim.  
 What more, Monteith ? ”

“ They say that sounds are heard,  
 Stern voices, though they know not what is  
 said ;

Oft threatening in tone ; sometimes a choir  
 Chimes forth mid-air like bells far overhead.  
 Moreover blazing meteors, falling stars  
 Thick thronging, as when fig-trees shed their  
 leaves,

Startle the constellations from their rounds.

’T is very curious, we must admit.”

“ Damnable superstition,” said Belmont.

“ My good Monteith, go with the guard to-  
 night,

And see thyself what shadow there may be,  
 Or plausible appearance thus to fright  
 Our soldiers panic-stricken so of late.”

Monteith departed. Silence now ensued.  
 Then Wilmot, cavalry leader of the left :—

“ Methinks ourselves are not devoid of fear,  
 That we do sit so silent. Where ’s the harp ?

Ah ! Seymour, here. Tune up its slackened  
 wires,

And troll us something, be it but a snatch  
 Of an old ballad.”

Seymour, thus addressed,  
Aided by Wilmot brought the harp, and took  
Down from its place the key, and stretched the  
strings  
To the due tension, thrumming gracefully,  
Then sang :

“ The black earth drinks,  
The water sinks,  
The trees revive again ;  
The torrents leap  
Adown the steep,  
To slake the thirsty main.

“ The Sun, too, sups  
From ocean cups ;  
The moon imbibes her light  
With a pretty grace  
From his jolly, red face  
No wonder she shines so bright.

“ Then blame not me,  
If blithe and free  
I drink as long as—— ”

He ceased, and said, “ Walton, a pest on thee !  
With thy long face thou hast destroyed our sport.  
Anacreon palls to-night. Let me recall  
A sober song, I wrote but yesterday.  
'T is rather dull, and all, who feel inclined,  
May go to sleep before they hear me through.”

## I.

The sun with brightness all undimmed  
Still bounds from sea to sky ;  
The moon yet holds with queenly sway  
Martial review on high.

## II.

And to the ancient harmonies,  
In grandeur and in joy,  
Unwearied still the veteran stars  
With stately tread deploy.

## III.

The serried columns of the right  
About Polaris wheel ;  
Orion leads the central mass  
With blade of burnished steel.

## IV.

Leftward Magellan and the Cross  
Their banners broad display ;  
Goodly as in the olden time  
This orderly array.

## V.

Spring comes with tender grass and flowers ;  
Summer, in vine-wreathed zone ;  
Autumn, with fruits and golden grain,  
And Winter,—drear and lone.

## VI.

Through the dim aisles of ancient woods  
With their drooping-pennon treasures,  
The choral voices of the Winds  
Chant slow cathedral measures.

## VII.

They rise to bliss, and echoing clear  
Chapel and nave resound ;  
They sink to woe, and faintly breathe  
A sweet yet plaintive sound.

## VIII.

Still through the caverns dark and dread,  
Still on the rocky shore,  
Ocean in changeless majesty  
Rolls with unceasing roar.

## IX.

Peal yet his thunders, which of old  
Man's inmost heart have stirred,  
Augustly beautiful, as when  
The first rapt listener heard.

## X.

What has been is. What is, shall be.  
In sky, on earth, in deep,  
All things continue as they were  
Since the fathers fell asleep.

## XI.

Asleep forever! O'er their graves  
To-night the sad winds sigh;  
To-morrow all this festive throng  
As low, as still may lie.

## XII.

The wildest tempest soon is hushed,  
And calmed the stormiest sea;  
But we shall know a longer rest,—  
A deeper silence, we.

XIII.

Then round we 'll roll the merry bowl,  
And we 'll give dull Care the slip,  
While the good red wine is in the vine,  
The smile on woman's lip.

CANTO V.

*Walton.*

The rest, save Walton, all applauded. He  
Was silent as before. To whom Belmont :  
“ Why, Walton, sitting at our festal board,  
Dost thou withhold the tribute of thy praise ? ”

Walton replied : “ Belmont, I frankly own  
My want of sympathy with what was sung ;  
And more, I hope to meet a better fate  
Than to lie down and perish with the brutes.  
Hear my belief, companions, soldiers, friends.  
There is a God, an immortality,  
A hell of hate, a heaven of love and joy.”

At this, astonishment was visible  
On every face, and they who nearest sat  
Drew back from Walton as in fear or wrath.  
“ A God? A God? ” re-echoed on all sides.  
“ A spy ! ” said one ; “ a traitor in the camp.”  
“ No, not a spy,” rejoined Belmont ; “ for see,  
His principles he openly avows.  
What frenzy, Walton, hath o’ertaken thee,  
That thou shouldst utter words so false as  
these ? ”



To whom then Walton : “ There was once a time  
When in my heart I said, ‘ There is no God ’ ;  
No God to mark my deeds, or punish sin ;  
No bottomless abyss of flaming hell.  
So I gave rein to lust,—wallowed in mire  
Of scandalous transgression, vice and guilt.  
In my career of madness I went forth  
To hunt the wild beasts in their fastnesses,  
And lay all night upon a mountain’s top  
With my brave comrades. Kindling first a fire  
To girdle us with flame, we fell asleep,  
Wearied with toil. It chanced that I awoke  
Before the rest, ere morning’s light had dawned,  
While yet the stars their holy watches kept.  
I knew not why it was, but in that hour  
They seemed to look upon me pityingly,  
From their eternal dwelling-place on high.  
‘ Poor mortal of an hour,’ methought they said,  
‘ Tossed to and fro upon a sea of cares  
A few short moments, then again to sink  
Into the dark, cold gulf of nothingness,  
While we in everlasting glory reign.’

I slept no more. A shudder seized my frame,  
And quickly climbing up a neighboring crag,  
That eastward beetled o’er the plain below,  
I sat and gazed around in blank despair,  
And madly cursed the day that I was born,—  
Cursed father, mother, nature, destiny,  
Fate or whate’er to me had being giv’n,

To mock me with a breath or two of life,  
The while within my inmost bosom burned  
Quenchless desires for everlasting life.  
O let me live, O live, forever live,  
I cried in deadly bitterness of soul.  
No answer came. The oracles were dumb.  
Far, far below I heard the roar of pines,  
And mountain torrents leaping from the heights;  
And loathed the winds and waters that should  
live,  
And move, and have their being age on age,  
After myself had mouldered into dust.  
Anon I heard a jaguar's hungry howl  
Faint in the distance, and I cried to him,  
Thou art my brother ; Fate hath made it thine  
To prey upon the lamb, as I on thee,  
And then like me to perish from the earth.  
I thought, why live in such uncertainty,  
Such horrible suspense, when one brave plunge  
Over this precipice would end my doubts,  
And, if my faith be true, forever still  
This aching heart, this ceaseless agony.  
God only kept me from that dreadful crime.  
Again I looked upon the heavenly orbs.  
Could chance, blind chance, or destiny, or nought,  
Devise, construct this perfect mechanism?  
Balance suns, comets, planets, satellites,  
To sweep so grandly through immensity?  
Is there no Author to so great a work ?

Who is it that with radiant bars of light  
Bridges the gulfs impassable of space,  
And floods with splendor all th' unmeasured  
voids ;

So that innumerable rays, that flash  
From worlds on worlds, are passing to and fro  
Without confusion ? That from every point  
Each star within our vision shows distinct ?  
What skilful hand has linked with silver wire  
Globe unto globe, revolving sphere to sphere,  
So that to me, who on this little orb  
Away, away am bounding through the deep,  
Should come these messages from distant realms,  
These telegraphic signals of the sky ?  
Who launched this beam, or this vibration sent,  
Which myriads of years has held its way  
With unimagined speed, and yet but now  
Reaches my sight ? Who framed the human eye  
With more than human art ? Who made the mind  
To read th' impression on the retina ?  
The soul to see, to understand, to feel  
The weight of glory in a scene like this ?  
While thus I mused, a pearly glow of light  
Spread like a luminous haze o'er th' eastern sky.  
The ebon background of the nightly heavens  
Softened to grey ; 't was the transition state.  
Day dawned, yet darkness mingled with the  
light.

But presently a shaft of living fire

Shot through the lofty chambers of the east ;  
Another, and another. Morning's wings !  
How beautiful their downy pink and gold !  
The sun arose and from the slumb'ring world  
Lifted the darkness, as a mother takes  
A veil from off a sleeping infant's face ;  
And earth awaking oped her eyes and smiled.  
The mists came rolling up the mountain slopes,  
Huge, phantom-like, till, mounting on the breeze,  
They vanished in the upper blue of heaven.  
Now all was clear ; the snow-clad peaks appeared,  
Ranges on ranges, far as eye could reach.  
A band of worshippers mid-heaven they stood,  
Choiring their matin song, ' *Praise ye the Lord.*'  
Westward afar the great Pacific lay.  
It was a goodly sight, and kneeling down  
I worshipped Him who made both heaven and  
earth.

The jaguar's howl was heard no more, but still  
The cataracts leaped exultant in their joy,  
And I was glad, for in my heart arose  
Hope of a being that should never end.  
Since then, in all my years of wickedness,  
I ever have believed that God exists ;  
And I have guarded this belief in Him,  
Even as a wanderer in some labyrinth,  
Lost in its mazes, guards the one dim light,  
On which his only hope of life depends."

He paused. Then Seymour first the silence  
broke.

“Believest thou in God, and endless life?  
 Why art thou here to war 'gainst those who hold  
 The same absurd delusion with thine own?”

To whom then Walton: “I have done foul  
 wrong,

Led by a love of danger, thirst for fame,  
 And all in war that fires our youthful blood.  
 Methought the Christians were misguided fools,  
 Of whom it might be well to rid the world.

For 't is one thing to say that God exists;  
 Another quite, Jehovah to confess,  
 Three persons in one God, forever one.

Now I avow that I believe in Christ.”

“Then shalt thou die,” cried Seymour with the  
 rest.

They drew their swords.

“Hold! hold! stay!” said Belmont.

“Not thus, not thus doth reason bid us act.

Let Walton tell us why he holds this view.

It may be nought but frenzy, which, methinks,

Is gaining ground in this good camp of ours.

If so, to Bedlam send him. Do not spill

The blood of a poor, raving lunatic.

Walton, thou mayest answer for thyself.”

He sighed, and thus his narrative resumed:

“It is a matter of astonishment

Unto myself, that I can dare to-night

Uphold the cause of Christ, the crucified,

Whose very name is odious to your ears.

But to begin. With long inaction tired,

And camp-life's weariness and listlessness,  
Taking no pleasure in the rabble sports,  
That suit the fancy of our soldiery,  
And willing recreation to obtain  
From any other source, I found one day  
A time-worn volume in a neighb'ring tent."  
Then, from his bosom drawing forth a book,  
He laid it on the table. Seymour, next,  
Taking it up and glancing at the back,  
Said, with contemptuous and disdainful smile,  
"The Holy Bible!—antiquated stuff,  
To hold enslaved so proud a mind as thine.  
Whence came this volume? Are there traitors  
here?

Spies from the city lurking in our camp?"  
"Not so," said Walton; "it was left behind  
By some unknown one on that famous day,  
When the chief captains of the Christian host  
Came under cover of a flag of truce."  
Seymour rejoined: "Away with such a book."  
To whom Belmont: "Revile not, thoughtless  
man,

This ancient writing. In the days of old,  
When genius wrought within the hearts of men  
Grandly and mightily, as yet untaught  
To know its own, inherent, inborn powers,  
Whoever noblest were in word or deed  
Were deemed and deemed themselves inspired of  
God.

And this was true. Those wondrous men whose thoughts,

Endowed with immortality, still live,—  
Perennial fountains in an arid waste,  
Or voices coming through the nightly gloom,  
And bidding us take courage in the fight,—  
Seers, whose sayings dark and parables,  
Brimful of wisdom, teach each coming age,—  
Were not all such inspired,—divinely moved?  
And yet it was not by a God afar,  
But by the Godhood in them, all unknown,  
That they so spake, and wrote, and ruled, and rule.  
I care not where the words of power are found,  
In Sanscrit Shaster, Bible, or Koran,  
Or quaintly and mysteriously carved  
On tablet, winged bull, or obelisk;  
Nor reck what sky he saw, what soil he trod,  
Whether the waters of Tiberias,  
Or sacred Nile, or Ganges laved his feet,  
In whom the Deity so largely dwelt."

Then Seymour said: "These are strange words, indeed,

To come from such a source. Pray tell us now,  
Why thou art here, if such be thy belief."

Belmont replied: "I do not own thy right  
To question thus one higher in command.  
But nathless I will fittingly respond,  
Apart from all in war, that makes appeal  
Unto our best and loftiest faculties,

The opportunity for high exploit,  
The joy of battle, and the pride of power,  
All that has summoned to th' ensanguined field  
The bravest, greatest men of every age,—  
There yet remains a prime and chiefest cause,  
Why in this conflict I should take a part.  
But first let Walton finish his account."

Then Walton spake again with serious air :  
" Many long years had passed since I had seen  
A copy of this book. I took it up  
Only to while the weary hours away.  
The first line my attention riveted,  
' In the beginning God created Heaven  
And Earth.' Announcement simple, yet sublime;  
Well fitted to commence the word of God,  
If ever He has spoken unto man.  
But specially this verse came home to me,  
As here containing in so brief a space  
The answer to my once bewildering doubts.  
Nor mine alone. To the great heart of man  
In every hour of peril, need, or woe,  
An affirmation sober, calm, assured,  
That in this universe a God exists,  
Of boundless might, sufficient to create  
Sun, moon, and stars, and earth whereon we stand,  
Is more than welcome. Such a word is sweet,  
And unto him that utters it, is turned  
The eye of hope; outstretched, the trembling hand.  
God is a Person, not a senseless force ;



Has understanding, purpose, choice, and will ;  
May care for that which His own hands have made.  
The world is not His body ; He, its soul,—  
As some have dreamed in late and ancient days ;—  
For He existed long before the world,  
And out of nought created heaven and earth.  
This the first statement. Next in order came  
Description of the void and formless earth,  
Where darkness, silence, and confusion reigned.  
All this our latest science doth confirm,  
As highly possible at many times  
In the long period that intervened  
Between earth's primitive and molten state,  
And the formations of succeeding years.  
Yet earth is not forsaken ; o'er the waste  
The viewless Spirit of the Highest broods,  
And by His power the six days' work is done.  
The world is fitted up for man's abode,  
As a fair palace for a monarch's son.  
And when God saw the softly rolling globe  
Display in turn each new, each beauteous scene,  
Oceans, and islands green, and continents,  
Gliding from starlit night to sunny day  
Upon the west, or eastward sinking slow  
Into the evening shades ; when He beheld  
Man in the loveliest spot of all the earth,  
In God's own holy, happy image made,  
And heard from beast and bird, from rock and  
wave,

One universal song of love and praise ;  
He bare this witness, ' All is very good.'  
'T was true of all, but chiefly so of man,—  
Man, as he plied his healthful daily toil,  
Sat on the banks of paradisaal streams,  
Or in the cool of evening walked with God.  
Such was his primal state ; and such, methought,  
It must have been. Indeed, no otherwise  
Could man have come from the Creator's hands.  
Hitherward, also, old traditions point ;  
Like the dim recollections of a prince  
Stolen in childhood from his royal home,  
Whose faint yet glorious reminiscences  
Tell him that he was born of kingly blood.  
What else the garden of Hesperides  
Than a poetic version of this truth ?  
And whence in various languages remote  
Accounts so similar of our first state,  
If not derived from some great common source ?  
That state is lost. The sacred record saith  
By voluntary disobedience.  
The guilty pair were driven from Paradise,  
And cherubim were placed as sentinels,  
While that a flaming sword turned every way,  
Forever to prevent all entrance there.  
Why may not this be true ? Thus much we know,  
That perfect happiness and purity  
For many an age have not been found on earth.  
Nor have they taken flight without a cause.

Eden is lost. Her radiant light still shines  
In the far distance, but a bridgeless chasm  
Stretches between our yearning hearts and her.  
In our lone wanderings we stop, and turn,  
And thither bend a long and wistful gaze,  
And feel, as far and farther yet we roam,  
That we are plunging into darker night.  
Hers was the Golden Age. All ages else  
Are but base metal. Manhood's hope and faith,  
Honor and truth, and woman's trust and love,  
With all the winning courtesies of life,  
Flower from seeds thence straying on the wind.  
We rear our palaces ; art, genius, gold  
Conspire the ancient grandeur to restore.  
High in the air the graceful domes arise,  
And fountains play, and verdure smiles around.  
Alas ! in vain ; a random thought of thee,—  
Eden, thy pleasant paths, thy goodly vales,  
Thy noon of bliss, thine eventide repose,—  
Steals on our hearts and wearily we own,  
Thy brightness and thy glory are not ours.

But ere the parents of the race were driven  
From their first home, to wander through the  
earth,  
God said to him who tempted them to sin,  
'Serpent ! I will put enmity between  
Thee and the woman, and between thy seed  
And her seed : it shall bruise thy head, and thou  
Shalt bruise his heel.'

Here the great Leader speaks,  
Captain of all the glorious hosts of Heaven,  
Though woman's seed to be, and gives the world  
The first conception of the coming Christ.  
This was the germ of what should never die ;  
A word that lingered an eternity  
In the God-heart, awaiting utterance,  
But now is spoken, shall be hushed no more.  
Like a sweet bell at midnight's darksome hour,  
So faint, so far, so fraught with hope and cheer.

The noblest work of God is here announced  
In language brief, and yet of meaning full.  
It was a promise that should be fulfilled  
After the lapse of forty centuries.  
Four thousand years should pass before the  
flower

In royal beauty on our earth should bloom.  
The grand idea of the Saviour-King  
Little by little unto men was given,  
Each prophet breathed a thought unknown be-  
fore ;

To the great portrait added some new touch ;  
Then left the work to others yet unborn,  
Who in their turn resumed th' unfinished task.  
From the foundation of the world, of old  
The fulness of this scheme was known to God ;  
Yet was the mystery from the ages hid,  
And slowly to the universe revealed.  
Therefore it was that prophets of old time,

As moved by God, successively declared  
So much, no more, but what to them was told,  
Each adding to the growing store of truth,  
Which reached at last, increased from age to age,  
The stature of the vast economy.

There was no going back to rectify  
Mistakes or errors of whatever kind ;  
But all things indicate one stable plan,  
Never by man entirely understood,  
Until the work was finished by the Lord.  
As when some stately edifice is reared  
And wrought upon by many a toiling hand,  
The general plan and full design unknown  
Save to the architect who guides the whole.  
So on this noble temple many wrought,  
Each building on what had been built before,  
And each preparing for what was to come.  
In the last days, the fulness of the times ;  
The crowning glory of the sacred pile  
For the chief Architect himself reserved  
Whose power and skill alone the work could  
end."

SEYMOUR.

Why was this thought of him, thou callst the  
Christ,  
Developed slowly through four thousand years ?  
Methinks it should have flashed upon the world,  
Like a bright meteor in the sky of night.

## BELMONT.

The meteor flashes, then in darkness dies ;  
Day's splendor dawns but slowly in the east.  
A flower springs up, and lives a summer through ;  
The yew-tree stands while centuries pass away.  
And so with thee, divine Philosophy.  
Some son of earth doth plant thee in the soil,  
And die, and others, that are later born,  
Water and tend, then sleep beneath thy shade.  
O ancient yew, thy roots are under ground,  
And feed upon the bodies of the dead.  
I do not marvel that the Godhood yearns  
Through time's long periods toward perfect Man ;  
Man the bright mirror of the Deity,  
Reflecting back the lineaments of God,  
As the clear pool the overhanging sky.

## WALTON.

Whatever reasons we might give, the fact  
Is that the Christ-idea slowly grew.  
Sometimes for centuries it lay quite still,  
Seemed almost lifeless, then awoke again,  
As in the case of Moses and his code,  
Wonderful man whose life in equal part  
Was spent in Egypt's porphyry palaces,  
In the stern solitude of Midian's wilds,  
And in the valley of the Akabah,—  
Cradled among the sedges of the Nile,

And dying on the top of Nebo's mount.  
A more eventful life, nor History  
Has told, nor e'en Romance has dreamed.  
A character more noble, more profound,  
The finest dramatists have never drawn.  
But that which my attention mainly caught  
Was this : of his divine economy  
The primal promise was the life and soul.  
Largely expanded now, it comes to light,  
Sad with the agony of bleeding lambs,  
Yet joyful in the hope of future heaven.

The overpowering truth pressed on my mind  
That such prediction, fifteen hundred years  
Before the coming of the promised Christ,  
Was utterly beyond the wit of man.  
Here a continual prophecy commenced ;  
For the High Priest, unceasing, year by year  
Entered the place Most Holy, all alone,  
Not without blood wherewith he sprinkled all,  
To signify that blood of priceless worth,  
Which should be poured out for the sins of men ;  
Bearing twelve tribes upon his jewelled breast,  
And clothed in clean and beautiful attire,  
To symbolize the great High Priest from heaven.  
The smoke of countless offerings arose,  
Fragrant with myrrh and incense, up to God.  
For many centuries this sacred pomp,—  
The strangest spectacle upon the earth,—  
Kept up the hope of an else hopeless world.

Half a millennium sweeps across the stage,  
And David comes, sweet lyrist of his race ;  
And with his psaltery and tuneful voice  
He tells us of a Prince above all Kings,  
More beautiful than all the sons of men,  
Gracious in speech, his sword upon his thigh,  
Riding before his hosts in majesty ;  
His throne, the everlasting throne of God,  
Himself the God whose throne endures for aye.  
Meanwhile the joyful noise of ten-stringed harps  
Breaks into wails, the voice is drowned in sobs.

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Three centuries again, and now a bard,  
Rapt with the visions of the future age,  
Sings of the Wonderful, the Counsellor,  
The Mighty God, the gentle Prince of Peace,  
The everlasting Father, yet a child  
Born of a virgin, to dominion born,  
Of tender soul to comfort all that mourn,  
To bless the meek, to bind the broken heart.  
A shout of joy comes thrilling from the lyre ;  
Anon, how changed, how plaintive are the  
    strains !  
His hero hath no form nor comeliness ;  
A man of sorrows, and acquaint with grief ;  
Oppressed, afflicted, opening not his mouth ;  
Bearing the sins of many, smitten, slain.



Two centuries elapse. A statesman-seer  
Foretells the death of God's anointed One ;  
He is a Prince, yet shall he be cut off ;  
The time, a half millennium away.  
And, last of all the prophets of old time,  
One looks far down the flight of troublous years,  
And sees a Ruler, stern and dread, arise,  
Whose coming wicked men shall ill abide.  
And then the voice of prophecy is hushed  
Four centuries ; and when 't is heard again,  
It rings from out Judea's wilderness,  
And says, Behold ! the promised Christ is come !

Ask ye the reason of this long delay ?  
O short-lived man, with God a thousand years  
Are as a single day. The pendulum  
That swingeth in Eternity's great clock  
Beats once a century. The earth whereon  
We stand, was made in weary lengths of time,—  
Weary to us, but not to God most High.

None of these prophets, if he knew not all  
That was to be revealed in distant times,  
Could know the meaning of the words he spake  
In their full import, nor prepare the way  
For words of others that should follow him.  
Nor could he learn from those, who went before,  
Precisely what addition he should make,  
Unless he knew the final unity,  
In which all prophecy should culminate.  
There must have been some Mind Superior

That guided, governed, and directed all.  
For look ! what elements incongruous  
Must need be blended in that unity !  
The Jews themselves conceived that there must be  
Two Christs :—one lowly, one of royal rank ;  
One gentle, merciful and sad of mien,  
One that should smite his foes with iron rod,  
And when his arm had won the victory,  
His robes should smell of cassia and of myrrh,  
Out of the ivory palaces brought forth,  
That he might wed the daughter of a king  
Clad in wrought gold and rare embroidery.  
And would combined impostors e'er have dared  
To introduce so variant accounts ?  
Characteristics that seem all at war  
One with another ? Is collusion here ?  
And would a skilful writer contradict  
Not only his confederates, but himself ?

SEYMOUR.

Might not the Galilean fishermen  
Have joined together to concoct a fraud ?

WALTON.

Could those unlettered men who spent their youth  
In fishing in that lake of Galilee,  
Have woven such discordant elements

Into that glorious unity, the Christ?  
They hoped that One should rise to set them free  
From the accursed yoke of pagan Rome ;  
Ascend the throne where David sat of old,  
And bring again the glory of their past.  
But when the son of Mary pre-announced  
His fearful sufferings and bloody death,  
It shocked their souls. They knew not what he  
said.

They could not have invented scenes wherein  
The Godhead and the Manhood jointly worked,  
Each doing what His several nature should ;  
The twain in one grand personage conjoined,  
But never once commingled or confused.  
Just as we see on Ocean's farthest verge  
Heaven stoop to Earth, yet Heaven is always  
Heaven ;

Earth lift itself to meet the bending sky,  
Yet Earth, though glorified, is always Earth.  
In this strange history, Eternity  
And Time together sit with clasped hands ;  
Two sisters they, that look so lovingly  
Into each other's eyes, and inmost hearts,  
And whisper of the deepest things of God.

Ah ! wondrous Christ, thou wast so strong, so  
weak,  
Before all worlds, yet born but yesterday,  
Doing a work that none but God could do,  
Dying a death that none but man could die ;

Hating all sin, yet loving them who sinned ;  
With eyes that never sleep, yet slumbering  
In thy fond mother's arms, or in a boat  
Rocked by the tempest of Gennesaret ;  
Highest and lowliest of all that are,  
Pure as the snow upon Sorata's heights,  
Yet guilty woman, shrinking from all else,  
Crept to thy feet and bathed them with her tears.

---

Could Galilean peasants have gone back  
Into the dim traditions of their race,  
And gathered up conceptions so apart,  
Scattered along through forty centuries,  
Shreds variant, discordant, as it seemed,  
And woven a transcendent unity,  
Wherein the very points which they had deemed,  
And all mankind would deem, as well as they,  
Irreconcilable and opposite,  
Were found to be most indispensable  
To the complete perfection of the whole ?  
Not one could be omitted from the list,  
Howe'er discordant it appeared at first.  
Could they have so portrayed this character,  
That all the extremes which in His being met,  
Were needed for the likeness which they  
limned,—  
Were needed for the work He came to do ?

But more, th' Evangelists could not select  
 Such features from the writings of old time  
 As they could fashion at their own mere will.  
 They must take all, each trait, each circum-  
 stance,  
 Each thought, or plainly set in view, or veiled ;  
 Often not understood until th' event  
 Threw back a light on what before was dark.

## SEYMOUR.

If I could but believe there was a God,  
 And that He ever stooped to dwell on earth,  
 Surely this Christ whom you extol was He.

## BELMONT.

O shallow thinker ! Is there not a God ?  
 And does He not from age to age evolve  
 His hidden pow'rs, His latent energies ?  
 From germ to plant, to leaf, to flower, to fruit,—  
 This is the law of His development.  
 And so, germ, plant, leaf, flower, foretell the  
 fruit.  
 Full many a fruit the kindly earth brings forth ;  
 And many a man hath been indwelt of God.  
 Such was, mayhap, this Jew of Nazareth,—  
 Greatest of all, as I have sometimes thought.

## SEYMOUR.

I cannot understand thee, noble chief.  
But tell me, Walton, something of the Jew,  
The Man who trod this wretched world of ours,  
And wildly claimed to be Almighty God.  
Was he what his disciples said he was?  
I mean not God. What was he as a man?  
Thou know'st how hero-worship often dreams,  
And gilds the idol which it bows before.  
Imagination "gives to airy nothing  
A local habitation and a name."

## WALTON.

A just analysis has ever shown  
That they who in the drama have excelled,  
Or in the general poetic art,  
Have always done it by their insight keen  
Into the human heart. It is beyond  
Man's power to create. That work is God's.  
And thus our William Shakspeare was a seer,  
Who held that all the world was but a stage,  
Where kings and clowns, where knaves and  
motley fools  
All had their exits and their entrances ;  
While he looked on, and noted what he saw,  
And through the gorgeous robes of kings and  
queens,  
As well as through the rags of simpering fools,

Beheld the palpitating heart of man.  
Then from the garner of his varied lore  
Took here and there a trait that served him best,  
And of these elements, combined anew,  
Made Hamlets, Lears, Othellos, or Macbeths.  
The combination was to some extent  
The poet's own. Not so the elements.  
Now take that book which on the table lies,  
One character appears, pre-eminent  
Above the rest ; and, I had almost said,  
But one appears,—majestic, beautiful,  
Now seen more dimly, now more clearly shown.  
Fairer than all earth's fairest is the Christ,  
Gentler than gentlest, greater than the great.  
I asked whence came these gracious lineaments,  
Found nowhere else but on this spotless page ?  
The separate elements are not of earth ;  
Each single tint is borrowed from the sky ;  
And 't is no earth-born genius that has wrought  
Into one Christ the manifold details.  
Now that full thirty centuries have passed,  
Since He ascended from Mount Olivet,  
And went to sit at God's right hand in heaven,  
All men admit He is above us still.  
In Him are heights the loftiest cannot reach.  
Since His appearance on this stage of ours,  
The noblest men are all dissatisfied  
With any less ideal. Far too low  
Seems anything that is beneath the Christ ;

And when they hope for heaven, they hope to  
 wake  
 In His blest likeness after death's short sleep.  
 This may seem strange, but stranger is the  
 love,  
 They bear to Him who died so long ago.  
 Now I bethink me how Napoleon  
 Mused on the ruin of his house and throne,  
 Imprisoned on St. Helena's bare rock,  
 'Gainst which th' Atlantic's waves with restless  
 surge,—  
 Image of his great spirit,—chafed in vain.

*(Reads from a ms.)*

My clarions long have hushed their cry,  
 My eagles droop o'er land, o'er sea ;  
 And on this lonely isle I die,  
     My France, afar from thee.

On Fame's colossal temple-door  
 High shall my name engraven be ;  
 And yet I pine for something more,  
     Far more, my France, from thee.

Of tender sympathy, a touch ;  
 A sigh when men shall speak of me,  
 A thought, a tear,—are these too much,  
     My France, to ask of thee ?



Too much, alas ! My sceptre flown,  
 And disenthroned my dynasty,  
 With sorrow and with pain I own,  
     France, thou art dead to me.

Spirits that in the past held sway,  
 My lot with yours must be the same,  
 To conquer, dazzle for a day,  
     And leave behind—a name !

One sole exception we confess,  
 A man from human frailty free ;  
 A God, for He can be no less,—  
     Th' Incarnate Mystery.

Him, as the ages onward sweep,  
 Shall greater multitudes adore ;  
 And men shall hear His name and weep,  
     When we are loved no more.

Then was there silence for a moment's space,  
 Till Seymour : " I am ready to admit,  
 'T is a sublime conception that of One  
 Combining in himself the twofold might,  
 Nature and gracefulness of God and man.  
 Save in the dreams of man, there is no God ;  
 But the conception lives, and never dies.  
 It runneth through the web of poesy,  
 Like a pure thread of gold through coarser stuff.

It archeth o'er us like the firmament,  
 Which by illusion seemeth spherical.  
 There is no vault of heaven. 'T is vapor, air ;  
 Yet thitherward the loftiest mountains rise.  
 So God is not, yet toward Him aspire  
 Whoso are greatest or in word, or deed.  
 Men do great actions in the name of God.  
 I cannot solve this riddle. 'T is a spell,  
 A word of mystery, of fear, of hope,  
 And never on a banner is it writ,  
 But some are found to gather 'neath its folds."

## BELMONT.

A spell? Ah, better say a talisman,  
 Graved on the universe, which evermore  
 Whispers to man the Name ineffable.  
 Few there may be, that have the hearing ear ;  
 But they are with divinest frenzy filled.  
 This we name Genius, whether it be shown  
 In statesmanship, or in the art of war,  
 Science, philosophy, or poetry.  
 In the first two, almost all men adore  
 The revelation of the Infinite  
 In the two following, some worshippers,—  
 Perhaps I might say many,—wait and kneel.  
 But in the last, the vast majority  
 Say, as they turn away, The poet raves.  
 And yet the sacred fire goes not out

Upon the mystic altar. Flamens quaint,  
In long succession through the centuries,  
Stand in the chancel and supply the flame,  
Which throws a ruddy and uncertain light  
On them who prostrate 'mid the shadows bow.

## SEYMOUR.

I lay no claim to comprehend our chief,  
Whose words of wisdom gloom upon our minds.  
A thousand years ago Napoleon  
Uttered some thoughts like those which Walton  
gave.

Who could have dreamed that he, that cruel man,  
Cruel though great, so longed for human love?  
Here am I, Seymour, in this pleasant war;  
Men smile upon me when they see me pass;  
And women, knowing what I am full well,  
Say with sweet voices, "Gayest of the brave  
Our Seymour is, and bravest of the gay."  
Doth any love me? Not one soul of man!  
And in my hours of sadness I exclaim,  
Ah! woe is me that ever I was born!  
What spell has fall'n upon us here to-night,  
That we unbosom thus our inmost selves?  
None loveth me to-day on all the earth;  
Yet I remember one that loved me well;  
Who gave me birth, who held me in her arms,  
Clung 'round my neck when I set forth from home,

But slumbers now beneath the dewy sod.  
Ah ! eyes of blue, when I behold your light  
Beaming upon me through the thickening cloud  
Of folly, sorrow, passion, and remorse,  
I seem to lie once more upon the heights  
O'erlooking Como's broadly placid wave,  
And see all heaven asleep within its depths.  
Yes, if there were a heaven, it would be glassed  
In those sweet eyes that ever follow me.  
O look not thus upon me, from the past,  
Ye haunting eyes, for ye are of the dead.  
Close your soft lids, and sink to sleep again,  
For ye are but the loveliest of dreams,  
And heaven itself a dream within a dream.

BELMONT.

Now speakest thou more nobly than thy wont.  
I like thee well, fair youth, with all thy faults.  
In this dead heart of mine, if love still lived,  
Know that a bounteous share thereof were thine.  
With all thy gayety thou hast thine hours  
Of sadness. Oh, had I one hour of joy,  
One Faust-like moment I should wish prolonged !

SEYMOUR.

Thou art too sad, great chief. If such thy woe,  
Thou needst this jewelled poniard more than I.

(*He unsheathes the weapon, and holds it toward  
BELMONT.*)

See, on this golden handle, amethysts  
Set round with pearls ; and on the topmost one  
Largest of all, graven in monograms,  
Her name entwined with mine, ah ! woe is me !  
For each to each we gave a solemn pledge,  
That by this selfsame dagger both would die.  
But, best of all, this keen and glittering blade,  
Straight as the line that shortest distance spans ;  
No crooked scimitar to hack and hew.  
Study anatomy, like Castlereagh ;  
Find out just where carotid arteries lie,  
And having learned thy lesson,—then strike  
home !

BELMONT, *smiling*.

Avaunt thee, Satan !

[Faded then the smile

As fades the glory of the twilight sky,  
When gold and purple change to steely gray.]  
My father died ere I beheld the light ;  
My mother when I was a tiny lad.  
I just remember how she lay so pale,  
When by her couch I stood to see her die.  
Scant love had I in all my boyhood's years,  
But in my early manhood there was one,  
Who loved me truly. She became my wife,

And bore a son, my Ernest. Both are gone.  
No winsome eyes look on me from the past ;  
But some that hollow are, from cheeks all gaunt,  
Look past me with a fixed and frightful stare,  
As they were gazing down eternity.  
Then blame me not, my Seymour, if I say,  
Saddest is wisest, wisest is most sad.

Walton, thou holdest that the Deity  
Came down from heaven to dwell upon the earth.  
This I admit is true. So Vishnu came,  
As is related in the Hindoo books.  
So too in classical mythology  
Jupiter, Juno, Venus, and the rest.

## WALTON.

Yes, I have read of Vishnu's Avatars.  
Think how he came, first in the form of fish,  
Next tortoise, bear, half-man, half-lion then ;  
Such thoughts as these degrade the worshipper.  
But He, who came to us from highest heaven,  
So spake and acted that in Him was seen  
The glory of the only Son of God.  
And on what trivial errands Vishnu came !  
To conquer giants ! No exalted work  
Such as a God might wisely stoop to do.

## SEYMOUR.

Just there,—I recollect what Horace says,  
A deity should never intervene

Without a knot that man could not untie.  
What was the work this Christ came down to  
do?  
Was 't something greater than our chiefest men  
Have dared or done? Was it some better thing  
Than kindly human hearts have sought t' achieve?

## WALTON.

It was a twofold scheme, that brought the Prince  
Of Glory down from highest heaven to earth.  
The first had special reference to Time,  
And had in view the history of the world.  
A personage appeared in Paradise,  
Called God at first,—the great Creator's name,—  
And then Jehovah God, th' Eternal one.  
He gave the promise of the Christ to come ;  
Appeared to patriarchs in their humble tents,  
To Moses in the desert's burning bush,  
Again on Sinai 'mid the fire and smoke,  
With lightnings, thunders, and a trumpet's voice  
Exceeding loud,—so terrible it was,  
The hearers quaked and trembled at the sound.  
So dread the sight, that Moses feared and  
quaked.  
This wondrous Being gave His law to man  
Out of the darkness of that blazing mount ;  
Then went before the Hebrews on their march,  
A cloud by day, a flame of fire by night ;

Glowed in the tabernacle's holiest place,  
Glowed in the temple o'er the mercy seat ;  
Appeared from time to time to sundry men ;  
Made claim to be the God of Israel,  
With special favor unto Abraham's seed ;  
But more than this,—claimed to be God most  
High,

And said that He Himself would be the Christ ;  
Yea, that He was the Christ through all these  
years,

But after lapse of forty centuries

He would appear on earth in human form,  
Born of a Virgin, and would work a change  
In the dominion He had held so long.  
Its narrow stream should widen to a flood,  
The sway enlarge till it embraced the world,  
An empire that should last till time should end,  
Save just before the end, a little while,  
The powers of darkness should rise up afresh,  
And make revolt against th' Anointed One.

In fulness of the times, as long foretold,  
A Jew arose, of David's royal race,  
In Bethlehem born, but reared in Nazareth,  
Who said He was the Christ, the Son of God ;  
That He had come to execute this plan ;  
That He would win all nations to himself ;  
That to this end, all power in heaven and earth  
Was given Him, a kingdom spiritual,  
Co-eval with, above, and over all



The kingdoms of the earth. Such was the height,

To which this lowly Nazarene aspired.

'T was an idea far beyond his age.

Not of this world, that holy kingdom was,

But in the hearts of men. Its glorious aim

Was to restore God's image to the soul,

Rescue a race, regenerate mankind,

Perpetuate among the nations peace

And give to wretched man a life divine,

Which, springing not from out the hidden depths

Of his own nature, comes to him from Heaven,

And shows its power in justice, truth, and love.

Was not this work one worthy of a God ?

After His resurrection from the dead,

The Christ-Man stood upon a mountain-top,

Together with a handful of His friends,

And bade them go and conquer all the earth ;

And, what no other conqueror ever did,

Gave them this pledge and promise of success,

“ Lo ! I am with you till the world shall end.”

This was sheer madness, or it was divine.

Augustus Cæsar, in whose gorgeous reign

The human Christ was born in Bethlehem,

Never conceived a purpose half so grand.

And was it not effected wondrously ?

Where is the Roman Empire in our day ?

It was a bold prediction on the part

Of Jesus, that His kingdom should endure  
 When Cæsar's throne had crumbled. Yet 't was  
 true.

Where are the Antonines? Where Constantine  
 Who bound two empires with an iron band,  
 Linking the East to th' West? And where is he,  
 Great Theodosius, Emperor of the East,  
 Who with his bristling bulwark of brave men  
 Guarded the western throne, and stayed the  
 hordes

Setting upon it from the savage North?  
 Alaric's teacher in the art of war,  
 He trained the future conqueror of Rome.  
 The seven-hilled city, trodden under heel,  
 Never regained her proud pre-eminence.  
 And where is Charlemagne, the Frank's stern  
 king,

Who by his prowess and sagacity  
 Rose to the throne as Emperor of the West?  
 Where now his weak successors? Otho, too,  
 The German who aspired to follow him?  
 Their names survive; their empires are dis-  
 solved.

The kingdom of the Christ stood strong through  
 all,

Stood many centuries, and stronger grew,  
 And overcame its most inveterate foes;  
 Drove out all idols and all fetishes,  
 O'erthrew Confucius, Brahm, Mohammed, Budh,

All hoary systems, all philosophies,  
And flourished on the earth a thousand years.

## SEYMOUR.

I grant the doctrine of the Nazarene  
Of all the superstitions was the best,  
That it should triumph o'er idolatry  
And hideous serpent-worship, was but right.  
But we are in a later time. The torch,  
Held by the Jew, has lit the way to truth.  
We take the true ; the false we throw away ;  
And most of all, reject belief in God.  
As soon believe in ghosts, "chimeras dire,"  
And goblins which affright the little child.  
Yes, in the morning of the human race  
A God hung o'er us, as an early mist,  
Vague, beautiful, hangs o'er the sleeping world.  
The sun shines forth ; the fog is lifted up  
From lowly vales, but lingers on the heights  
That overlook the river's winding way.  
The long, gray fringes, soft and delicate,  
Trail o'er the forest's green anear the sky.  
But day advances, and the morning mist  
Is gone, and all things now are bright and clear.

## BELMONT.

What is the mist? A vapor that we see ;  
But vapor always dwells amid the air,

Mostly unseen. Sometimes it gathers dense,  
 And shows itself on vale or mountain top ;  
 Anon it floateth as a cloud in heaven.  
 So this belief in God exists for aye,  
 Never quite absent from the hearts of men,  
 Sometimes it seizes on the vulgar mind,  
 And works a reformation or crusade.  
 Yet oftener it hovers 'round the heights  
 Of Socrates, of Plato, or of Christ,—  
 Or, in some Mystic, hath no touch of earth,  
 'T were an ill thing to banish from the air  
 All healthful vapor ; and it were a worse  
 To drive from this our world belief in God.  
 Walton, if thou hast more to say, say on.

## WALTON.

The second part of this great scheme refers  
 Unto Eternity, whose dazzling lights  
 The Gospel like a broad reflector throws  
 Athwart our pathway in this mortal state ;  
 Supernal brilliancy of highest Heaven,  
 Intense, refulgent, brighter than all hope ;  
 While in its shadow more than man can fear  
 Of darkness is concentrated. This is Hell,  
 Whose sombre pall covers and hides from view  
 More than Earth's utmost anguish and despair.  
 He, whom you name the Jew, the Nazarene,  
 Says that He came to rescue wretched man

From ruin darker than a felon's doom, —  
More terrible than groans of wounded men,  
Or shrieks of women bending o'er the slain ;  
A ruin ending not with earth's brief years,  
But stretching on and on forevermore.

This is the work that Christ came down to do.  
Its grandeur overpowers the mind of man.  
It reaches back far, far beyond the time  
When man first stood upon the smiling earth ;  
Beyond the geologic eras vast,  
Whose slow succession dragged their weary  
length ;  
Beyond what time the worlds came bounding forth,  
Fleet-footed coursers of the trackless void,  
Or launched like mighty steamers on the deep,  
Aglow with inward fires whose billowy smoke  
Streamed darkly on their path through boundless  
space ;  
Beyond what time the first-born Sons of God,  
The principalities and powers of heaven,  
Flashed forth like lightning into glittering ranks,  
With primal splendor startling ancient Night,  
And Silence with their first melodious songs ;  
Before all things save God Himself alone,  
This comprehensive plan lay in His thought,  
As the Eternal mused upon His works,  
And brooded on the universe to be.  
It reaches onward into endless years,  
And lifts a countless multitude to heaven,

To endless life, and holiness, and bliss.  
 The Christ shall gather into one abode  
 The good of all the ages. There shall be  
 No sin nor shame in all that happy world ;  
 No grave shall lift its long and narrow mound,  
 Nor yawn with sunken and insatiate jaws ;  
 Nor night be there, nor danger to affright,  
 Nor tear, nor cry to mar the perfect peace ;  
 Forebodings none, nor disappointment's blight,  
 Nor falsehood's smile, nor treachery, nor hate.  
 There shall be changeless love in all that realm,  
 Fond hearts that never, never shall grow cold,  
 Each loving all the rest, all loving each,  
 And all forever full of holy joy.  
 So that the Christ shall come again from heaven,  
 And make His dwelling with the sons of men,  
 And they shall reign with Him forevermore.

O Heaven, how sweet thy name. On dying men  
 Thy prospect, lovelier than childhood's dreams,  
 Dawns like the Day. Thy softened splendors fall  
 On trees and flowers, on gently rolling streams,  
 And glorify the faces of the saved.

Was not this work, too, worthy of a God ?

SEYMOUR.

Now, as I live, I would this might be true.  
 It is a very lovely dream ; no more,—  
 Else 't would redeem this empty life of ours  
 From being what it is, a tedious farce.

## BELMONT.

No ! not a farce. Better a tragedy  
Deep in its plot and various, subtle, fierce.  
I long for the denouement, good or ill ;  
But that, I judge, is far from this our day.  
Walton, there is one failing in thy Christ ;  
At the approach of death he shrank and quailed,  
Methinks a man in whom the godhood dwelt  
So largely, as, thou say'st, it dwelt in him,  
Would never falter. Women have been thrown  
Into th' arena where the lions roared  
Waiting their prey, and not a sigh escaped  
The fair young lips. No fear was in their hearts  
Of flaming eyes, or claws, or bloody fangs  
Of beasts about to tear them limb from limb.

## WALTON.

There was no tremor in the heart of Christ  
In view of Roman swords, or spikes, or cross ;  
But the dread wrath of God because of sin,  
That He should bear upon th' accursed tree,  
O'erpowered His soul with sorrow unto death.  
More bitter was the cup of which He drank,  
Than all the bitterness of earthly draughts,  
Something we know not—may we never know—  
Something mysterious confronted Him,  
And His heart trembled, for He was a man.  
Take now Prometheus of the Grecian stage,

Chained to a rock by Jupiter's command,  
On a projecting crag of Caucasus.  
The fervid sun upon him beats by day,  
The biting frost congeals his limbs by night.  
Unborn the man whose hand shall set him free.  
A moan escapes him. "Woe is me," he saith ;  
Yet he continues proudly to rebel.  
When Mercury, the messenger of Jove,  
Threatens a triple vengeance on his head,—  
Fierce thunder, wingéd with the lightning's  
flames,  
Shall rend the rock, with ruin cover him ;  
When he at last shall be dragged forth to light,  
The ravening eagle shall upon him feed,  
Plunging his beak into his tenderest flesh,—  
Prometheus disdains the tyrant's threats,  
And scorns the utmost vengeance of the god.  
Plainly the Poet understands his theme.  
Prometheus is a pagan deity,  
Companion of the gods, a demigod,  
Weaker than Jove, but stronger much than man ;  
And far removed above our sympathies.  
Just as, 't is said, an ancient Russian Czar  
Had his equestrian statue carved of stone,  
Horse, rider, pedestal of one huge rock,  
A granite boulder, man and base alike,  
That awed and chilled but could not win the  
heart.  
Ah ! it was necessary that the Christ



Should in one Person be both God and Man.  
 And thus His struggles in Gethsemane,  
 And His sharp cries while on the bitter cross  
 Disclosed the weakness of a human heart.  
 This is a touch beyond the utmost art  
 Of Galilean peasants.

Look you now

At William Shakspeare how he paints Macbeth.  
 He hesitates about that deed of blood ;  
 Advances, halts, his conscience cries, " O stay !"  
 Ambition says " Go on !" he strikes the blow ;  
 Then, in that hour of darkness and of dread,  
 He trembles when one knocketh at his door.  
 But who of all earth's limners could portray  
 Almighty God and trembling man in one ?  
 And what impostor could have e'er devised  
 That scene amid the shades of Olivet,  
 Or that upon the height of Calvary ?  
 Or would have dared employ them, if he could ?  
 They are beyond all human authors' reach.  
 No ! here we see the hand of God Himself.  
 Those awful cries ring through the centuries,  
 And men who hear them beat upon their breasts.  
 And now, those cries resounding in my ears,  
 Can I continue in this godless war ?  
 Belmont, my high commission I resign ;

*(He lays a paper on the table.)*

I cannot fight against the Christ of God.

Now a dead silence fell upon the group,  
 And nought was heard except the sougning wind,  
 And the great banner flapping overhead.  
 Then Walton raised his eyes to heaven and said :

Sacred breast for me so riven,  
 Hands and feet all pierced and torn !  
 Is it Thou, the Lord of Heaven,  
 On this bloody cross upborne ?

Pale thy cheek, thy forehead gory,  
 Motionless in death thine eye !  
 Brightness of the Father's glory,  
 Hast Thou stooped, for me to die ?

Grace beyond my sins abounding,  
 Nameless pity, strong and deep !  
 When I view this scene astounding,  
 I can only kneel and weep.

While the tears my eyes are blinding,  
 To Thy feet my lips I press ;  
 Peace and pardon strangely finding,  
 Through my Saviour's sore distress.

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There was another pause. Then Seymour said :  
 " Alas ! poor Walton, for thou art but crazed,  
 To sorrow thus about thy Nazarene,  
 Who has been dead for thrice ten centuries.  
 Ah ! woe is me, full many a bitter cry

Comes from the dreadful past ;—will not be  
hushed,  
But echoes through the chambers of the brain.  
Chiefly at midnight when all other sounds  
Are stilled. At such an hour one comes to me.  
I hear it now ! Silence, accursed wail !

*(He starts up, and clutches the jewelled dagger.)*

“ Did ye not hear it ? No ? Was ’t but the wind ?

*(He sinks back into his chair.)*

“ Yes, ’t was the wind. And she is dead,—is  
dead ! ”

WALTON.

The dead still live.

SEYMOUR.

Still live ? Oh, craze me not !  
Tell me not, Walton, that the dead still live.  
Out on thee, madman ! For the dead are dead.  
Yet look not thus upon me, eyes so dark,  
Out of that pale, pale face, its bloom all gone ;  
Or I shall madden and destroy myself.

CANTO VI.

*Belmont.*

Belmont was deeply moved. He rose and trod  
Sternly and silently, as though he mused,  
From end to end of th' tent. Then at the door  
Stopped for a moment, looking at the sky ;  
Stepped forth with face upturned ; came back  
and said :

“ A storm is rising ; stretch at once o'erhead  
The cover of the tent. Enlarge the trench.  
The upper deep is flecked with snowy sails  
Of a vast cloud-fleet scudding with the breeze.  
Near th' horizon, mounting momentarily  
Toward the zenith, crowds on crowds appear  
Of black-winged squadrons that infest the air,  
And wage on high a nobler strife than ours.  
I see the flash of heaven's artillery ;  
And hark ! its thunders swell upon the ear,  
Sweeter than music o'er the nightly wave.  
I would I were the lightning's subtle flame,  
Ethereal essence of the godlike fire !  
How would I leave afar the haunts of men  
To weave about each loftiest mountain-top

A glittering diadem ; to smite the oak,  
 And hurl it crashing to the trembling ground ;  
 Or, robed in clouds, to wing my distant flight  
 To the remotest corners of the main,  
 Whose waters never have been cleft by keel ;  
 There, marching on the furious blast by night,  
 To gleam along the billows far and wide  
 With a terrific splendor, and send forth  
 My train of thunders roaring o'er the waste.  
 Ah ! that were life ; but this our dull routine  
 Of daily drill in arms, and evening sports,  
 Is bare existence. O for battle's joy !  
 Had I but had my way, I should have crushed  
 This puny, egg-shell city long ago."

WALTON.

Tell me, Belmont, what scheme thy mind has  
 formed  
 In reference to this great universe.

BELMONT.

Hear, Soldiers, one and all.  
 Whatever is, was from eternity ;  
 But 't was not in the forms we now behold.  
 There was a time,—if time it may be called,—  
 When there was nought save Matter, Space, and  
 God.  
 No worlds were floating in immensity ;

There were no angels, and no souls of men.  
 Then God was one,—as He is now, in truth ;  
 Then God was great, as He shall ever be ;  
 In nature one, of substance uniform ;  
 Not matter ; call Him Spirit, if you like,  
 God was not matter ; matter was not God.  
 A nobler essence, God,—pervading space,  
 Being, not living ; with capacity  
 Of boundless life in His vast nature's depths ;  
 Spirit without or feeling, thought, or will.  
 And yet enshrining potency of all.  
 And matter was, through space disseminate,  
 Its particles immeasurably small,  
 Immeasurably distant, each from each.  
 Matter and God alike were uncreate,  
 And both alike are indestructible.  
 Now what is God ? Yon star, which I beheld  
 Shining in highest heaven, a moment since,  
 Sent me a message many years ago,  
 Borne by the Æther present everywhere.  
 This Æther is almighty. It is God ;  
 And the star whispered to my soul, " God is !"  
 This is God's substance homogeneous.  
 'T is this which was, and is, and is to come.  
 No force resides in matter of itself,  
 Save power to resist and to repel.  
 All force attractive dwells in God alone.  
 He is not force, but force is found in Him,  
 All power to live, to labor, to create.

In all His works Deity immanent,  
Producing all effects phenomenal.  
Yet matter is the Godhood's complement.  
He could without it have accomplished nought ;  
For 't is the stuff of which He weaves His robes.  
God acts on matter ; it reacts on Him.  
That rising wind which dashes through the trees  
That crown the heights above yon river's brim,  
Sets them in motion ; branch and twig and leaf  
Play on the wind. All music thus is made.  
The wind must have its harp of Æolus ;  
The harp, its wind ; or all is still and dead.  
So, without matter, Æther would have lain  
Dormant forever. Brahm would ne'er have waked  
Out of his slumber in the ages past.  
But matter was from all eternity,  
And Æther an eternal waking knew.  
By His intrinsic force each particle  
Moved tow'rd its fellow through unnumbered  
years,  
Till all became one whole, formless and void,  
Vast beyond thought and yet not infinite.  
'T was thus God made the heavens and the  
earth,  
Ev'n as the Hebrew seer said of old.  
And darkness rested on the dread Abyss,  
That nestled under God's o'erbrooding wings.  
Now atoms smote on atoms, and there came  
A tremor in the bosom of the Deep ;

For God said, "Let light be"; and lo! light was.  
The thrill was fainter than our lightest thought,  
A glow most delicate; yet winged its flight  
Throughout th' Abyss and far beyond its bounds,  
Widening and widening till the circling waves  
Died on the borders of Immensity.  
This was the dawn of Day, that now uprose  
And won a province in Night's ancient realm.  
It lay amid the Night, as lies a pearl  
Hid in the tresses of a Hindoo bride.  
It was a smile upon the face of God,  
The promise of an ecstasy to come.  
It was, in truth, the very Son of God,  
The Word revealing, and the God revealed.  
Or, as the Greeks would say, Minerva sprang,  
Goddess of wisdom, from the brain of Jove.  
The Godhood, like a slumberous giant, strove  
T' arouse Himself. His first grand struggle this,—  
This, His first victory; for "Know Thyself,"—  
That is the wisest word a Greek e'er spoke.  
Toward this the Deity forever strives,  
And partially attains it in the Great.  
Prophets and Poets all have owned the flame,  
Artists and Sages have confessed the power.  
But this was later. For the first of days  
It was sufficient that the light arose;  
That the God-heart with its first pulses throbbed  
And felt the joyous, vibratory thrill.  
For light was good. Ah me! The light is good!



Then came the second day,—the period  
When God said, “Let there be a firmament  
Between the waters, and let it divide  
The waters from the waters.” This was done  
Not once, but many times. It was the law  
Of the whole period. The waters are  
Matter existing in a vaporous state :  
Matter has two chief forms that strike the sense ;  
The solid and the fluid, land and sea ;  
The stationary and the movable.  
That early age was not so nice as ours  
In physical distinctions, and the Sage  
Called all things waters in this nascent form,—  
Less scientific, more poetical,  
More philosophical than modern phrase.  
Just as the brightest minds have ever sought  
For formulas of comprehensive grasp,  
Gaining in compass, range, and breadth of  
thought,  
More than is lost in accurate detail.  
So with the Hebrew.

Now the luminous mist  
Obeyed attraction’s and repulsion’s laws,  
And thus was formed each island-universe  
Of rotatory motion ; globe-like some ;  
Others in spiral convolutions whirled,  
Fervid and glowing in the mazy dance.  
Ages elapsed, the process still went on ;  
Each island, first removed immensely far

From all the rest, in systems now divides.  
These in their turn revolve about themselves,  
And, nicely balanced, 'round a centre wheel.  
Take, for example, that in which we dwell.  
The mist became a burning-glass in shape,  
Revolving on its short diameter.  
As the huge volume small and smaller grew,  
The inner portions sped more rapidly,  
Until a ring was severed from the mass,  
Contracting to a globe in lapse of time.  
This we call Neptune. Like a sentinel,  
Darkly and silently he treads his round.  
So with the rest. Planets and asteroids  
Were rent by piecemeal from the shrinking mass.  
Waters from waters were divided thus.  
Now centuries on centuries go by ;  
Matter condenses into molten globes,  
Hotter than seven-times heated furnaces.  
Each planet is a red and threatening star.  
In course of time the surfaces grow cold ;  
And now a fleecy covering is weaved  
With crimson flames that slowly pale to white.  
The molten mass next hardens to a sphere.  
Part that before had been in liquid state,  
Solidifies into an outer crust.  
Vapors that float aloft are turned to rains,  
And fall in showers on the parchéd ground ;  
Yet some are subtler and remain on high.  
Thus in its order comes the brave expanse,

And heaven first spreads its dome above the earth  
 The third day comes, and, cooling down yet more,  
 The crust is cracked and wrinkles in ravines,  
 Into whose depths the waters pour themselves,  
 Dry land appears, but most in mountain-heights.  
 The circumambient waves are called the Seas.  
 Ocean is born, and from its glassy front  
 Reflected gleam volcanic, dreadful flames ;  
 And hissing on its way this bomb-shell earth  
 Spins as it flies.

Thus were the planets made.  
 Such was the Godhood's first cyclopean life,—  
 Blind, powerful, titanic. Now behold  
 A higher life, a new development.

WALTON.

Canst thou unfold the mystery of life ?

BELMONT.

I can at least disclose my final thought.  
 All life is motion ; not all motion, life.  
 It is not life to whirl as planets do  
 About their suns. Not light itself is life,  
 Though 't is the garment of th' Invisible.  
 The lowest form of life was in the plant,  
 Some type of Algæ,—call it Photophyte,—  
 That grew upon the margin of the Sea.  
 But know full well that matter never lives.

Matter may move, is moved ; but life is God's.  
Matter was forced to take some complex form  
By a blind instinct of the deity,  
By fate, or, if you like, by accident ;  
For intellect and choice were not as yet.  
The organism on the Æther then  
Reacted and the Æther thrilled with life,  
As on the first day it had thrilled with light.  
First light, then life, the nobler of the twain.  
Thus the harsh winds, that howl about our tent,  
Smite on the camp, are smitten back in turn,  
And vent their spleen in discord loud and hoarse.  
But let Zephyrus breathe on Seymour's harp,  
And it evokes the Soul of harmony.  
Mayhap at first a single string responds,  
Yet presently another adds its note,  
Touched by the fingers of the breeze unseen,  
Till many-chorded music greets the ear.  
So life began upon this lifeless orb.  
" Let the earth bring forth grass, herbs yielding  
seed,  
After its kind the fruit-tree bear its fruit.  
And it was so." Now trunk, and stem, and leaf,  
Flower and fruit, come dancing from the earth.  
For Flora, maid of beauty, waves her wand,  
Like an enchantress, o'er the island peaks,  
And the rich valleys swelling from the deep.  
Was it not so ? Do not the igneous rocks  
Still show the traces of the world of plants,

Life's first born in their granite sepulchre?  
The fourth day now, in which the satellites,—  
Moons to the planets,—take their shape and place.  
Planets were fashioned in the previous age.  
The central masses gather up their strength  
Into resplendent suns. These viewed from far  
Are stars that grace the firmament of heaven.  
These are for lights, signs, seasons, days, and  
years.

The fifth day brings a higher grade of life,—  
The animal, the seat of thought and will,  
Being that tastes of pleasure and of pain.  
The Protozoa in the waters move,  
In numbers countless,—most abundantly.  
The Godhood first displays intelligence,  
Now first exhibits consciousness and choice.  
This life, I know not whether 't was evolved  
Out of that previous, lower one of plants,  
Or freshly rose as that had risen before.  
Certes the deity now struggles up  
From low beginnings to a higher plane,  
And higher yet as ages wing their flight.  
Matter reluctates, but the work goes on ;  
The Godhood yearns for ever nobler forms,  
Though sometimes baffled in its upward course,  
As mightiest rivers have their eddies too,  
And yet their currents broader, deeper grow.  
Organs unfinished in the earlier tribes  
Are prophecies of things which are to come.

8

Now fishes cleave the cool refreshing seas,  
And the birds mount and carol in the air.  
Nature is vocal. In preceding days  
Winds through the forests moaned, and restless  
waves

Dashed on the beach in melancholy wail.  
But now the eagle screams above the main,  
Thrushes and linnets pipe amid the groves,  
And the fond turtle to the list'ning vale  
Breathes the soft notes of tenderness and love.  
Sentient existence, conscious, blissful life,—  
Such is the fifth day's gift. The sixth day  
hears

The roar of beasts, the lowing of the herds.  
But one step more and then the goal is reached.  
O Image of th' Almighty, glorious Man !  
Highest development of Deity ;  
Born to dominion, nobler than the brutes ;  
Able to count the worlds, to weigh the stars ;  
And what is greater far, to know Thyself,  
And thus know God, for God is one with Thee.  
The hour of thy nativity is come ;  
It rings upon Eternity's great bell.  
Walk forth on earth, and as thou viewest all,  
Flora and Fauna, vales and solemn woods,  
And snow-clad peaks, and broadly rolling seas,  
Day's glory, and the quiet heaven of Night,—  
Say, as thou only canst, that all is good.  
Thy history is God's. He finds in thee

Self-consciousness. Thy strength and grace are  
His.

In thee the deity's long striving ends ;  
Thou livest, movest, being hast in Him.  
And thou, O Spirit of the universe,  
This, this is life, to know, to feel thy power  
Thrilling our heart-strings into ecstasy.  
In thee we claim a kindred with the stars,  
With the great mountains, deserts, torrents,  
floods ;  
And as we see the light of myriad worlds  
Soft glowing through the ethereal regions vast,  
We kneel to this Shekinah and adore.

WALTON.

Art thou, then, God ?

BELMONT.

I am a part, but not the whole of God.  
He is the substance that pervadeth all  
The personalities that dwell on earth.  
I am a part of matter, not the whole ;  
My nervous system finer than the clod,  
My brain more exquisite than that of brutes ;  
And thus I know I am a part of God.  
The seventh day is not yet, but it shall come ;  
That day of rest, when Brahm shall sleep again,  
And souls returning unto God, who gave,

Shall find in him their coveted repose.  
 Evening and morning were the first of days ;  
 Evening and morn, the second, and the rest,—  
 Or Night and Day, as we should term them now.  
 Night brightens into Day ; Day sinks to Night.  
 Such is the law of things. The human frame,  
 With the day's labor wearied, falls asleep.  
 Earth has her winter, and man's dozing age  
 Slumbers in death. So with society.  
 Nations are subject to the general law,—  
 Are born, grow, flourish, then decay and die,  
 If we speak truth it is not death, but sleep.  
 Why then should Brahm not sleep? The Hindoo  
 Sage

Felt and expressed the strong necessity,  
 The yearning for repose in Nature's heart,  
 When he taught Man each kalpa's rise and end.  
 Like a sweet floweret that folds in its leaves  
 At night's approach,—so shall this mighty frame  
 Reverse the process of its forming age.  
 In all things are the elements of death.  
 Earth's moon is dead ; its plains are deserts bare ;  
 Its mountains girdle horrid chasms and gulfs,  
 Scorched with the fires that died out long ago.  
 No sprig of grass is there ; no drop of dew,  
 No sign of life midst universal death.  
 And earth has passed her days of hey-day youth,  
 Rollicking springtime, rich in bud and bloom.  
 'T is glorious summer now, when fruits and grains



Smile o'er the fertile vales. The little hills  
Clap their glad hands, and shout aloud their joy.  
But Winter couches low at either pole,  
And sternly, coldly, surely bides his time.  
All worlds by imperceptible degrees  
Shall lose the morning swiftness of their course,  
And in one mouldering ruin disappear.  
Just as man's body, wasting in the tomb,  
Into its elements at last resolves ;  
So with God's body, this fair universe.  
Life, motion, separate being all shall cease,  
Light, earliest born, the last to close her eyes ;  
And then shall ancient Night resume her reign,  
And quell this rebel province to her sway,  
Ocean of Darkness, thou no pity hast ;  
Forever dashing madly on the beach,  
Where the far nebulæ defend the coast ;  
Thou seekest to o'erwhelm this upstart isle,  
And thou shalt gain thine end, Most Terrible !

---

Thus dies the universe. Thou canst not die,  
Thou, who of old the earth's foundation laidst ;  
Whose hands have wrought the heavens with all  
their hosts.  
Perish all else, yet thou shalt still endure.  
They shall wax old, and as a garment thou  
Shalt change them, and thy vesture shall be  
changed,  
Thou art the same. Thy years shall have no end,

WALTON.

And shall the universe awake no more  
From this dread death which thou hast named a  
sleep?

BELMONT.

Saith not the Seer, "Thy vesture thou shalt  
change?"

The Æther's power is infinite, because  
The Æther's self extends without a bound,  
And stretches through th' infinitudes of space.  
It cannot act where it is not itself.  
Hence as this spacious universe contracts,  
The Æther's power diminishes therewith.  
Matter repels,—resists the Æther's force;  
As this grows weak, the other stronger grows;  
And so at last an equipoise is reached,—  
An equilibrium, and that is Death.  
The Æther uses matter as a means  
Of acting on Itself. Force never dies.  
Countless vibrations have but sped abroad  
To heap up Force in regions far away.  
Ere it reflows, the stubborn energy  
Of matter drives the atoms all apart.  
Each particle with endless being fraught  
Survives the wreck. This is the law of laws,  
And underlies all others. Next to this,  
Is the great law of change. Man wakes from  
sleep,

And to the toil of daily life returns.  
Earth wakes from winter, and spring's kindly  
    warmth  
Mantles her form in beauty and in bloom.  
This is the law of change : From death to life,  
From life to death again forevermore,  
As Ocean ebbs and flows, and flows and ebbs.  
So Brahma, Vishnu, Siva have their rôles,  
And thus they run : Create, Sustain, Destroy ;  
Or we may say, Uplift, Uphold, Cast down.  
And Brahma placed our earth in Vishnu's arms,  
A smiling babe, now grown to womanhood,  
A dream of beauty. Vishnu falls asleep,  
And Siva comes and strangles her to death.  
Then Siva slumbers, and the mystic Three  
All sleep in Brahm, for He is all in all.  
Ages on ages pass, and Brahm awakes,  
And re-creates the Triad, and again  
The word is given, Create, Sustain, Destroy.

CANTO VII.

*Symposium.*

He said and paused, apparently absorbed  
In his own thoughts. Then Walton : " Dost accept  
The first leaf of the Book inspired of God ?  
What credence givest thou to all the rest ?"  
To whom Belmont : " I hold, much truth is found  
In all religions,—much too that is false.  
To Moses and the Prophets praise is due,  
And the first chapter of the Book makes clear  
That the great Hebrew spake as moved of God ; or  
That is, in him the Godhood largely dwelt,  
More than in other men of that his day.  
And otherwise we strive in vain to show  
The source of his deep wisdom. Yet I think  
That even here his views too narrow were,  
Nor understood he fully what he wrote.  
Ever the sayings of the Wise are dark,  
Though clearer to themselves than to the herd.  
The universal Spirit muses long  
Before it understands its own high thoughts.  
'T is so in every science ;—most in this  
Which seeks the knowledge of his inmost self ;

And many centuries had passed away  
 Before a true interpreter arose,  
 Those words of purest wisdom to expound."

WALTON.

Thou speakest of a spirit ; yet 't is plain  
 Thy God is but a subtle form of matter.

BELMONT.

The Æther is not matter, for it has  
 No weight ; does not retard the comet's flight,  
 Whose gauzy veil dims not the faintest star.  
 What men style spirit, seems to me but nought ;  
 Ev'n less than empty space, if such might be ;  
 A mere vacuity that cannot have  
 Length, breadth or height, or qualities or powers,  
 But is the merest shadow of a name.  
 Æther exists, 't is here, 't is everywhere ;  
 In its totality has boundless strength ;  
 Has been of old, from all th' eternal years ;  
 Knows not decay, can never cease to be.  
 I ask, of what can these be true save God ?  
 All life is God's ; all thought, all will are His ;  
 All love, all hate, all sorrow, and all joy.  
 Nought else can think, or will, or love, or hate.  
 Crass matter surely can do none of these.  
 Then what is left us but that wondrous Presence

Which doth inhabit this broad universe,  
 But which the heaven of heavens cannot contain?  
 This mighty fabric is engulfed in God,  
 Who is around, above, beneath it all;  
 And be it still, or sweepeth it along  
 Age after age straight forward on its course,  
 Yet is it ever midway of the Deep,  
 As Time is midway of Eternity,  
 While in at every window looks the Night.

Would I were all of God, as I am part;  
 For then through boundless space would I enjoy  
 The long Nirvana of the Buddhist creed,  
 And, stamping out this hostile universe,  
 Would wrap myself in darkness as a robe.

WALTON.

This Æther which thou claimest as thy God,  
 Is only Matter, thin and tenuous;  
 For 't is elastic, and it answers back  
 To thrills of light-producing molecules,  
 Or bounding pulse of human nerves or brains,  
 As air responds to quivering strings of harps.

BELMONT.

Then call it Matter, Walton, if thou wilt.  
 Names do not terrify me as of yore.  
 A thrill of nerve begets a thrill of soul;

How could this be, if they were not alike ?  
 The chasm betwixt the brain and what is called  
 Spirit, has ne'er been bridged, can never be.  
 How does that ghostly Nothing apprehend  
 The motions of the substance that we are ?  
 Take cognizance by eye, or ear, or hand ?

## WALTON.

I cannot tell. This is a depth profound ;  
 And yet I know that something in me thinks,  
 And feels, and wills. Matter does none of these.  
 Canst thou in millimetres measure love ?  
 Count the vibrations of a trembling hope ?  
 Or graphically represent a fear ?  
 My hand, my eye, my ear are not myself,—  
 The mystery denominated I.  
 Rend them away from me ; I still remain.  
 Have Æther's particles free will or choice ?  
 Can they be one, as I myself am one ?  
 Is each of them an individual soul ?  
 Or does a cluster make one conscious self ?  
 Do countless tiny atoms, all apart,  
 Gyrate in curves or spirals intricate,  
 And is this whirling motion thought or will,  
 Noble self-sacrifice or tender trust ?  
 A movement to the right,—can that be joy ?  
 A left-ward progress, terror or despair ?  
 Surely, Belmont, thou canst not thus believe !

## BELMONT.

The wine in yonder crystal cup hath caught  
Its color from the sun, and flasheth forth  
From out its heart a beauteous ruby red :  
And this upon the retina doth beat,  
Making vibrations many million-fold  
In one brief second's space. Thus much we  
know.

But is this all? No ; something stands behind  
In the brain's deep recesses that can see.  
I hold it is the Æther, which thou know'st  
Is there. Why fly to something that is Nought?

## WALTON.

Belmont, our spirits are most real things.  
Infinite ages ere there was a world,  
Spirit existed. Out of nothingness  
It summoned matter by creative act,  
And holds it up in being to this hour.  
And though this mighty universe should sink  
Back to the nothingness from which it came,  
Spirit would live, and live forevermore.  
That first of spirits is th' eternal God,  
And we are like Him, though of less degree.  
We think, we feel, we will, we love, we hate ;  
All these we do, and yet we know not how.  
We too are tied to matter, like the Christ,



Who stooped to earth to share our lowly state,  
 And bore to heaven a body like our own.  
 How can this be? I own I cannot tell,  
 Nor all the mysteries of life explore.  
 But still thy theory, though 't is akin  
 To ancient Grecian thought, rests on the sand.  
 From star to star thy Æther may extend,  
 Or ev'n beyond; but is it infinite?  
 This were a mere assumption, wanting proof.

Then as to us poor trembling sons of men,  
 If what thou hold'st be true, death ends us all,  
 And none of us hath life beyond the grave.

BELMONT.

*(With a troubled look and sighing deeply.)*

Sooner or later Seymour's tuneful harp,  
 Its strings all snapped, shall crumble into dust  
 The winds that wont to wake its melodies,  
 Shall seek for it in vain through tent or hall,  
 Shouting, "Where art thou, friend of joyous  
 hours?"—

Anon to whisper softly, "Art thou dead?"

Man dies. His nerves and brain disintegrate,  
 And the fond Æther stirs him not again.  
 Dust unto dust perpetually returns,  
 And these proud bodies shall again be clay.  
 Why not? We momentarily are giving back  
 Unto the world of Plants the elements

Which it had lent to us. Thus keep we up  
The never-ending commerce of the realms.  
We die ;—our bodies turn again to dust ;  
That is in part,—for gases first exhale,  
Float in the air and nourish trees and flowers.  
Perchance the warrior's sinews re-appear  
In the tough branches of the sturdy oak ;  
While the young maiden's bloom adorns the rose,  
And her fair forehead in the lily shines.

All vegetation feeds thereon ; the moss,  
Lowliest of all,—cedars of Lebanon,  
And giant pines of California,  
With mountain firs and ash. By these again  
The animals are fed, save such as prey  
On others. That removes it but a step.  
Thus from the rhizopod to th' elephant,  
And from the dewdrop's viewless denizens  
Up to the lord of seas, leviathan,  
The range extends. We may become each one.  
This is the truth that lay concealed beneath  
The fables of the East. Who kills a worm,  
May tread some hero's dust. That dust again  
May shine in arms, may glow in battle's front.  
Thus may we live, and thus we still shall be.

WALTON.

But hast thou never felt desire, Belmont,  
For individual life beyond the grave ?

And gives thee not that thought a single pang,  
That thou thyself, Belmont, shalt cease to be ?

BELMONT.

( *With a dreary smile.* )

“ Man is a billow ; God the shoreless sea.”  
So spake the seers of the olden time.  
Once more to mingle with the Infinite,—  
This is our end. Should we refuse the boon ?  
Can we refuse it ? No ! 't is doom ; 't is fate.  
Once I was in a storm. 'T was night. I slept  
In a good barque, and dreamed of friends and  
home.

Methought the sky was blue, the air was sweet,  
Laden with votive offerings of the flowers ;  
And they were there, the long-lost ones, the dead,  
All there again in that ancestral hall.  
But suddenly the sky grew black ; the wind  
Began to howl, the house to rock, the earth  
To reel beneath our feet,—and I awoke ;  
Awoke to hear the shouts of frantic men,  
And woman's scream, and the mad tempest's roar.  
I felt the strong ship quiver as a horse  
Under his rider's lash. The Captain cried,  
“ Great God, we 're lost ! ” Ah ! there was terror  
then.  
Men's hearts gave way, that ne'er had quailed  
before.

They fell upon the deck ; they cried to heaven.  
All but myself. I struggled through the crowd.  
One flung his arm around my neck, and said :  
“ O pray, Belmont ! ” I sternly thrust him off,  
And made my way above, and lashed myself  
Fast to the mainmast. If an age, O Hell !  
Spent in thy darkest confines, doth contain,  
A tithe of that dread hour's agony,  
Let me ne'er dwell a moment in thy pit.  
But those weak wretches, how I envied them,—  
And scorned by turns,—who thought their souls  
should live  
Forever, and yet shrieked, and raved, and prayed.  
All that is past ; yet it is sad to think,  
However high with hope the pulse may beat,  
Whatever rapture kindle in the heart,  
Or fire of genius glisten in the eye,  
All, all must perish from the goodly earth,  
As lightnings are extinguished in the sea.  
Great sea of God ! so fathomless, so calm  
Far down beneath the sparkle of thy waves ;  
The laughter of the young, sweet music's charm,  
Blushes of maidens at the words of love,  
And smiles of mothers o'er their cradled joy ;—  
These are the ripples playing o'er the Deep,—  
O God, how deep, and how unmerciful !  
But the strong voices of great orators,  
Rousing the hearts of men to glorious deeds,  
And the fierce shout of battle, and the rage

That overpowers fear in human breasts,—  
Are they not billows surging mountain high,  
And struggling heavenward for the mastery?  
Yet both alike shall faint, and die away,—  
Shall die in thee, O God, the pitiless!  
Fate, grant me this, that what I am, be doomed  
Not long to linger in the idle grave.  
Let me not be the dull, insensate clod.  
The storm, the whirlwind, heaven's resistless  
fire,—  
Such be Belmont. Or better still, be Man,  
Man as he shall be, not as he is now.  
As for the rabble, I would rather be  
A crawling worm, or some curst pestilence,  
The scourge of earth, stealing my way by night,  
And blasting all the coward multitude.

WALTON.

“Man as he shall be,”—was it this thou saidst?  
And hast thou yet a lingering hope of life  
Beyond the Present?

BELMONT.

The sages taught us that Eternity  
Moves not straight on, but in a cycle's round.  
Five myriads of years that round requires;  
Then what has happened shall occur again,

Another Tiphys be, and steer his ship,  
The good ship Argo with its heroes choice,  
Seeking the golden fleece from Colchian shore ;  
And swift Achilles sail again to 'Troy,  
And drag a Hector 'round the city walls.  
In earlier life methought this might be true.  
Matter was finite ; Æther, infinite ;  
And, in the course of endless years, the Past  
Must of necessity repeat itself,  
Though it should take a myriad myriad years.  
But when I saw the struggling Deity  
Advancing step by step to higher forms,  
Saw how imperfect were the noblest men,  
The noblest always most dissatisfied,  
And longing most for something unattained ;  
I held there might arise a golden age  
Foretold by Sibyls, and by horrid Fates,  
Clotho and Lachesis and Atropos,  
And promised to His followers by the Christ.  
Then men shall be immortal like the gods,  
Exalted men, of giant intellect,  
Profound in knowledge, of supernal power  
To fly on tireless wing from star to star,  
And garner knowledge from the utmost heavens.  
If I may not be God, the Infinite,  
I would be Man, the highest form of God ;  
Man with the grandeur that is yet to be.  
But could that wondrous Being, so august,  
Remember me and know that he was I ?

What is this Personality which binds  
 Past, present, future of our life in one?  
 What chain is this, unseen, impalpable,  
 Yet stronger than most ponderous links of steel?  
 Am I the same, that once, a little boy,  
 Hung 'round my mother's knee, and feared the  
 dark?

What is the during substance that abides  
 Through all the changes of our mortal state?  
 Sameness of brain and nerve, of form and mold?  
 Or,—matter changing—Æther still the same?  
 But when this human frame disintegrates,  
 And all its atoms scatter to the winds,  
 The bond is broken. It is I no more.

## WALTON.

Despairing man, thine is a joyless faith.  
 Wert thou not happier to be as they  
 Who know not, think not of such fearful things?

## BELMONT.

Thy words were wise, if happiness were all.  
 The highest crags are those most scarred and  
 riven  
 By the red thunderbolt. When winds are heard  
 Through the deep forest sighing, 't is the oak,  
 Lifting its lofty head above the rest,  
 That gives so plaintive answer to the breeze.

Noblest are saddest. Christ was sorrowful ;  
 And when I see His anguish-stricken face  
 From some high Olivet look down on Earth,—  
 The tear-drops stealing from His piteous eyes,—  
 I almost feel that I could worship Him.  
 And worship Him I do, but not as thou.  
 I bow before the sadness so divine,  
 World-sadness gathered in one woe intense.  
 As to myself, thus much I may disclose :  
 Once from the Andes' west acclivity  
 I saw a condor mounting tow'rd the skies.  
 There is a grandeur in a bird's ascent  
 That made my heart leap in me, from a boy.  
 And so I watched him circling higher still,  
 Almost unseen, when lo ! a lurid shaft  
 Shot from an envious cloud and pierced his heart.  
 Mine too it pierced. " Yet, thou proud bird," I  
     said,  
 " May I but reign like thee, and like thee die,  
 Without a moment's warning or a fear."  
     Nobly to die—yes, nobly,—that 's the word,—  
 This well becomes the great, and fitly ends  
 The life-long tragedy. Then let me fall  
 Leading my legions, dying sword in hand.  
 Let soldiers bear me to a soldier's grave ;  
 Let wild, impassioned, melancholy strains  
 Of martial music sadden all the air,  
 Supported by the cannon's sullen roar ;  
 And let men say, " Here lies what was Belmont."



## WALTON.

Sorrow is great, but joy is greater still.  
Thou wrongest Christ with any other thought.  
I know that He was sorrowful on earth ;  
But this was for a purpose,—for a time.  
He bare our griefs, He carried all our woes ;  
It pleased the Lord to bruise Him for our sakes ;  
But now the bitterness of death is past.  
God is forever blessed. I rejoice  
To look above the storms that ravage earth,  
To th' undisturbed serenity of heaven ;  
As from some peak we view an azure sky  
While hostile tempests war far, far below.

God is forever happy, and the good  
Partake forever of His bliss and peace.  
Man then at last shall realize those hopes,  
Man there shall gratify those large desires,  
Which now and here heave like a troubled sea  
In some pent cavern by the ocean's marge,  
That longs t' expatiate on the boundless main.  
These are what Christ hath promised wretched  
man.  
What sayest thou of them ?

## BELMONT.

They are prophetic. I have felt them oft,  
Stirring the waters of my inmost soul ;

Yet they foretell not what myself shall be,  
 But what the godhood shall one day attain.  
 For progress is a fundamental law  
 Of individual men, the race, and God.  
 "Onward, still onward," is the word of march ;  
 And when the drumbeat of the Universe  
 Falls on the listening ear of Deity,  
 He presses forward with a warrior's step.  
 On, on forever ! There is no retreat.  
 His rest is but a sleeping on his arms.

Not so with us. The oak attains its size  
 After protracted centuries of growth,  
 Then gradually sinks into decay.  
 Man finds his acme,—first in what is called  
 His body ; then in what we style the soul ;  
 Then on his being's shore dies like a wave.  
 The Infinite proceeds far otherwise,  
 Halts but to gather strength for future deeds,  
 And those new deeds are greater evermore.

## WALTON.

What thou rejectest is a personal God.  
 Thou dost accept the Pantheistic One,  
 The Absolute ; Entity tenuous,  
 Essence diffused throughout immensity,  
 That thinks not, feels not save by matter's aid ;  
 That slumbered through a long eternity,  
 And slumbers now more deeply than of old,

Except in this broad temple of the worlds,  
 So vast to us, yet but a point to Him.  
 To Him?—to It; that is the proper word.  
 And of this new-made temple we are priests.  
 Only in us can It say 'Thou, and I.  
 In us the Æther worshippeth itself;  
 Man is self-conscious God, and God is Man.  
 Man is, forsooth, the highest form of God!  
 Ah! in my wildest wanderings from Him,  
 I never strayed so far. Either no God,—  
 None, none at all,—or else a God in truth;  
 Distinct from Nature, Maker of the worlds;  
 No fiction crowned and seated on His throne.  
 I reverence but I cannot worship Man;  
 Much less beasts, birds or reptiles, stocks or  
 stones.

"God is not personal except in man."  
 Such thy belief. Now how are we to know  
 That man is personal save by his works?  
 An author is a person, for he shows  
 Intelligence and will. An artist too  
 For the same reason. Look at Nature's book,  
 With gold and crimson, lily-white and blue  
 Illuminated; garnished with designs  
 Of mountains, forests, lakes, clouds, waterfalls.  
 If any man interpret what is writ,  
 Or if he catch a glimpse, just here and there,  
 Of the all-wondrous glory that enrobes  
 This little planet whereupon we dwell,

How loud are our encomiums on his skill !  
And shall we say that He,—that That which  
made

All, and immeasurably more, hath less  
Of understanding and of will than Man ?  
Can He be blind who formed the eye to see ?  
Or deaf, who made the ear ? Was less required  
To frame our bodies, exquisitely planned,  
Than to discover, by research prolonged  
Through many ages, how and why each part  
Performs its functions ? Does the mother know  
The structure of its curious organism,  
As with unmeasured fondness she surveys  
Her tender offspring nestling in her arms ?  
How, of her substance, cartilage and bone,  
Muscle and nerve, blood, artery and vein  
Have been wrought out ? How from her crimson  
tide

Soft silken hair and eyes of blue were made ?  
Or why the father's forehead, or those lips,  
Which she herself now presses to its cheek,  
So re-appear and claim redoubled love ?  
Or knows she aught of tissues cellular,  
And all the deep economy of life ?  
There is a wisdom loftier than man's ;  
There is a purpose older than his will ;  
There is a Spirit whose transcendent power  
Created and sustains this universe.  
Him I adore,—not that which He hath made.

## BELMONT.

This fable of the priests I once believed,  
And certainly some instinct leads the mind  
T' attribute personality to God.  
Man looks in Nature's mirror and beholds  
His own reflection,—like a graceful tree  
Leaning above a lake,—and calls it God.  
He stands upon the Brocken of the world,  
Sees his gigantic image on the mist,  
And deems the spectral effigy divine.  
Once I believed as thou. I might again,  
But for the difficulties in the way.  
God, to be God in thy sense of the word,  
Must be not only wise and great, but good ;  
Supremely good, aye ! good beyond our thought,  
Is thy God good ? Answer me from thy heart.

## WALTON.

Thyself hast said it. Good beyond the thought.  
Of men or angels. Take thine upward flight  
Through space, upon imagination's wing  
For centuries, till thought is wearied quite,  
And thy tired spirit droops and sighs for rest ;  
Yet there are heights above thee, all un-  
reached.  
They never can be reached by aught save  
God.

## BELMONT.

If so, then wisdom, might,  
And goodness, all are infinite in Him.  
Look at this world, deluged with misery.  
When has there been in all its history  
An hour, a moment when it could be said,  
There riseth not a bitter cry of woe  
To Him, thou callest good? Despair and death,—  
Hearts wrung with anguish, mine among the  
rest,—

These, these have been the history of the world.  
Has woman's piercing shriek above her dead  
E'er ceased to ring in the Eternal's ear?  
Has He not heard the sound engirdling earth,  
The dismal wail caught up from land to land?  
Man cries in vain to God. He hears us not;  
Heeds not our frenzied prayer. O God of Love,—  
If such there be,—when I stood by my son,  
Mine only one, my boy, my beautiful,  
And saw the death-dew gather on his face,  
I had not prayed for many a long, dark year;  
But being in extremity of grief,  
I said, "Oh! mercy, fearful, unknown One."  
He gasped for breath. I fell upon my knees,  
And cried, "Behold my bleeding heart, O God,  
That heart which Thou hast given me, if Thou  
art."

No answer came. I heard the night winds moan;

I saw the moonlight resting on the lawn,  
As peacefully as on my bridal eve ;  
But heard not, saw not Him on whom I called.  
I could not bear to see my darling die ;  
So I strode out of doors. The stars moved on  
Just as of old. Then I gave up to Fate,  
Which beareth all things onward, men and worlds,  
All, all alike, with one resistless law.  
Therefore I say, the wisest are most sad ;  
Yet wisely sad. Their sorrows should lie hid,  
As ocean's horrid caverns 'neath the waves  
Whose tranquil surface ripples in the breeze,  
Or, stiller yet, reflects the fleecy clouds.  
So should all genial fancies, lightsome thoughts,  
Play o'er the great man's mind ; but all things  
grand

Bury themselves within his mighty heart.  
Let nothing but the lightning probe those depths,  
Those rock-ribbed chasms where shipwrecked  
treasures lie.

Why speak of this to-night? I cannot tell.  
Is the wine poisoned by yon goodly bowl,  
That ought to give us thoughts if sad, yet sweet?  
Ah ! no. The chalice of my life is drugged,  
And I but taste its bitter dregs to-night.

WALTON.

'T were vain to say that Sorrow is not here,  
Nor has been through a sore and weary past.

But joy has had a dwelling-place on earth.  
Man's cup is not all bitter. Not so dark  
Seemeth this goodly earth to other eyes.  
The fireside circle with its light and warmth,  
The glow of health, the bounding pulse's play ;  
And all th' exhilarating sense of life,  
When on some balmy morn we wander forth  
Through shady groves, o'er meadows broad and  
green,  
While the young lambs are playing, and the  
birds  
Carol aloft or flit from tree to tree ;  
The distant cock-crow, and the plowboy's song,  
The sunshine's splendor free to all the world,  
The swarms of insects sporting by the rill,  
And the blue sky above us, tell not me  
Of a malignant deity on high.  
Surely we have the rains from bounteous heaven,  
And pastures rich, and kindly fruits of earth,  
Filling our hearts with gladness and with food.  
Storms rend the sky, but then come restful days,  
And God bestows ten thousand benefits  
Unneeded for existence on this earth,  
But teaching us the goodness of His heart.  
Forget not all the pleasure thou didst draw  
From thy poor son. His birth was hailed with  
joy ;  
And when thou sawest him in his mother's arms,  
The while she lay so pale, so beautiful,



Thy bosom heaved with calm and pure delight.  
For months and years he gladdened all thy  
home.

God lent him to thee for a happy space ;  
He took his own,—thy anguish knew no bounds,  
And thy one sorrow drowned a thousand joys.

## BELMONT.

Walton, O stay thine hand ! Ope not again  
The wounds that I had thought would bleed no  
more.

They bleed afresh to-night.

## WALTON.

I fain would soothe  
Thy bitter agony, not probe it to the quick.  
Oh ! had the quiet of that moonlit hour  
But calmed thy troubled soul, and taught thee  
trust

In God's great mercy ! Hadst thou wept and  
said,

“ O God of love, thy will, not mine, be done ! ”

If an Almighty Being reigns on high,  
How could it profit Him to be unjust,—  
To be malign to aught that He hath made ?  
The weak resort to treachery and guile ;  
The avaricious rob for filthy gain,

Which they could not acquire by other means.  
 But boundless strength and boundless opulence  
 Need not to stoop to measures base like these.  
 Then shall we judge that God, so often good,  
 Is yet malicious for pure malice' sake?  
 Hyper-Satanic and incredible !

Deep, in our hearts the sovereign power of love  
 Has been implanted by our Maker's hand,  
 That we may love our fellow-men, but most  
 That we may love the Fountain of all good.  
 For power and wisdom none of us can love,  
 But all love nobleness, self-sacrifice,  
 Gentleness, sweetness, generosity.  
 Can love be bought? Ah! yes. But we must  
 pay

Gold for its gold ; for love is bought with love.  
 Can we love cruelty? Love malice? No.  
 If God be cruel, be malignant, then  
 He hath so wrought the temper of our souls,  
 That we can never love Him. Why were this?  
 Why give us love for that which He was not?  
 Nay more, there is a hatred in our breasts  
 For cruelty, oppression, falsehood, wrong.  
 Such things deserve our hatred ; and we feel  
 That scorn of them is virtuous, is right.  
 Why form us thus, if He deserved our hate?  
 Why did He lift us higher than the brutes,  
 That nothing know of virtue or of vice?  
 At least, we should not then have hated Him.

Why not have framed us that we should revere  
What now our inmost spirits do contemn,—  
A deity of malice and revenge ?  
Admire and love the cruel and the base,  
And hate the godlike, and abhor the good ?  
But as we are, the noblest of our race  
Most love the good and most detest the ill.  
If God should perpetrate one cruel deed,  
It would forever overthrow His throne.  
Then must we take our choice between these two :  
A senseless substance which thou namest God,  
An idiotic something,—who knows what ?—  
Evolving from itself the loftiest minds,  
And purest virtues that adorn the world ;  
Or else a Being great, and wise, and good  
Beyond the utmost limit of our thought ;  
Whose ways we cannot fully understand,  
But who has given us His solemn pledge,  
That through the ages He will do the right.  
Most Merciful, Most Gracious is His name ;  
Abundant both in goodness and in truth ;  
Yet He will punish sin.

BELMONT.

Sin ! Punish sin ! And what is sin, I pray ?

WALTON.

That which is hateful to a holy God.  
But say thyself.

## BELMONT.

Sin is a milestone on the Appian way,  
Past which we journey to th' eternal city ;  
A stairway by whose steps we climb to heaven.  
The brutes feel shame ; they never know remorse ;  
For only man on earth is self-condemned.  
Sin is an outer shell, that binds and chafes ;  
We must burst through it ere we wing our flight.  
Oh, stairway steep and narrow ! Heaven, how  
high !  
We slip, we fall, we lacerate our flesh,  
We cry aloud with pain, and this is Hell.  
No other hell awaits us. 'T were unjust.  
Eternal city, art thou but a dream  
Of slumbering godhood in these poor, poor hearts?  
The centuries pass. Thou seemst no nearer us.  
If nearer, thou art still beyond our reach ;  
And in this curst Campagna's pestilence  
We sicken, faint, and die afar from thee.  
We die, alas ! but never live again.  
Perhaps the godhood that has risen above  
The brute, and sins and suffers now in man,  
Shall reach, one day, the height of sinless heaven.  
So thought the Nazarene. It may be true,  
But not for those who dwell on earth to-day.

## WALTON.

And hast thou known remorse ?

## BELMONT.

The godhood in me oft has felt its pang.  
The Æther vibrates in a certain way,  
And years pass by, and lo ! a random word  
Falls on the ear ; the former thrill returns,  
And the dead Past leaps into life again.  
Ev'n while I speak, a scene comes back to view ;  
A leafy wood, a dim secluded nook  
Fanned by the early breeze, the sun not up ;  
Two surgeons, and two seconds, I and he.  
A voice cries " Fire ! " One shot rings out.  
'T is mine.

He pales, he sinks, is caught in friendly arms,  
And gently laid along upon the sward.  
" Shot through the lungs " : From nostrils and  
from lips  
Hot scarlet blood flows forth. He gasps for  
breath,  
And his wild eyes stare upward, all aghast,  
Into the dread and fathomless Abyss  
That holds all worlds in its relentless grasp.  
" Fly ! " shouts my second. " Fly ! the law !  
the law ! "

Have I not fled o'er scorching desert sands,  
Through mountain fastnesses, o'er oceans broad ?  
Fled,—but he follows me. There's no escape.  
Into that same Abyss my eyes look out,  
Beyond the worlds, beyond the Day, the Light,

The joy, the hope that cheer the heart of man.  
Oh, that our prison walls, impalpable,  
Yet stronger far than thickest plates of steel,  
Would close, and crush the universe and me !  
I stand in battle's front. Men call me brave ;  
They do not know how much I long to die.  
To right, to left of me, a thousand fall ;  
My life is charmed. Alas ! that it is so.

WALTON.

Thy life is spared ; then wilt thou not repent ?  
Thy sin was great, but it may be forgiven.

BELMONT.

Forgiven ? The past can never be recalled.  
No power on earth, in fabled heaven or hell,  
Can change a particle of what has been.  
Forgive ? How can the Æther pardon sin ?  
Unconscious deity forgive a crime ?  
The ancients should have made another Fate,  
With long, gray hair, with sunken, haggard eyes  
Forever looking backward at the Past,  
Wringing her lean and bony hands in vain,  
And weeping tears that scald her withered cheeks.

WALTON.

This holy book reveals a conscious God,  
Who gave His Son to die for sinful man.

His blood can wash away our foulest stains,  
Not by annihilating what is past,  
But by atoning for our blackest guilt.  
Love bids thee come, as multitudes have come,  
To find forgiveness in the Crucified.  
This is the way to holiness and heaven ;  
The path thou treadest leads to death and hell.

CANTO VIII.

*The Christ.*

He said and paused, and there was silence now  
About the festive board ; when suddenly  
There fell upon their ears a thunder-clap  
With startling nearness. Then Belmont arose,  
Went to the tent door, and looked out again.  
“ ’T is very dark, without,” he said ; “ Is this  
The first loud peal, or have the rest of you  
Heard others ? ” Mowbray answered, “ There  
have been  
Several but none so near. ” Belmont returned,  
“ I do remember now, as ’t were a dream,  
The vague impression of a sullen roar,  
Which, whether it were thunder, or the sound  
Of cannon at a distance, I knew not.  
Now, while I look, it does not seem so dark,  
The dusky outlines of the neighboring tents  
Show like huge earth-born monsters ; and afar  
A glow hangs dim above the city walls.  
Night’s noon is near. I ever loved this hour,  
So calm, so quiet after day’s rude noise.  
O Night, thou silent mother of us all,



From whom we came, to whom we shall return  
 To slumber on thy breast, world without end ;  
 The winds, thy mystic daughters, wail, as now ;  
 Thou speakest not a word. No sound of grief  
 Escapes thy lips. Thou gently coverest us  
 With thy soft mantle, and we wake no more.

'T is strange our spies come not. 'T is time  
 they should,

For it grows late. My age demands repose.  
 I am not what I was. These youthful sports  
 Weary me, and in truth I often yearn  
 To sink into that long, unbroken rest."

Returning to the table, then, he said :

"Thou errest greatly, Walton. I have marked  
 Each thought, each argument thou hast advanced,  
 And nothing thou hast said is new to me.

Thou holdest still that hideous dream of hell,  
 Which artful priests, and women long have taught,  
 Priests unto women, women to their babes,  
 Who cover up their heads for fear of ghosts,  
 And kneel as wisely to a vengeful God.

The superstition tarries in the mind,  
 And grown men shrink from passing graves by  
 night,

And tremble at the thought of endless woe.

'T was thus the priests for ages ruled the world,  
 But now the world is wiser than the priests,  
 And tramples superstition in the dust ;  
 Nor brooks the folly which so oft had driven

To groans and prayers before a crucifix,  
Far from the haunts of men, in cells and caves  
Beneath the darkly burning taper's ray,  
While penitents in sackcloth, cord, and cowl,  
Lie prostrate on a floor of earth or stone.  
And now no mothers immolate their babes.  
Man offers not whole human hecatombs  
To save himself from hell's eternal flames.  
Away, then, with this frightful phantasy ;  
Away with priestcraft and its lake of fire.

Then as to Christ, that more than wondrous  
man,

In many things so far beyond his age ;  
Beautiful fable of those ancient times,  
A smile upon the face of deity !  
None can admire the story more than I.  
With him in thought how often have I trod  
Along the shores of Lake Gennesaret,  
Or walked upon the waters by his side ;  
Have heard the plashing of the mighty waves,  
Felt the cool waters lave my sandalled feet,  
Beheld the bark in which the twelve were tossed  
Fearful amid the tempest and the gloom.  
I have stood with him, where the great have  
failed,  
In obloquy, desertion, torture, death.  
Then, where the story into fable turns,  
Have seen him issue from his rocky bed ;  
Have heard his voice breathing of love and peace,

To those who in his hour of danger fled.  
Yes, I have seen him mounting to the skies,  
And when the cloud received him from my sight,  
I have turned sadly back to earth, convinced  
That all the generations she has borne,  
Could show none like Him. Moments there  
    have been

When I was tempted to admit His claims,  
Abandon truth and reason, and believe.  
But it were idle to believe a myth.  
'Rose from the dead! Ascended into heaven!  
Sits at the right hand of Almighty God!  
Shall come to judge the living and the dead!!'  
What! shall he sit upon a radiant throne,  
And summon all the nations to his bar?  
That Nazarene? That dead and buried Jew?  
How could he judge the dead?"

WALTON.

The dead shall live again.

SEYMOUR.

Grant me a word. The dead shall live again?  
Whom meanest thou by this? The multitude  
That dwelt on earth in all the hoary past?  
Populous cities? Long-forgotten tribes?  
The denizens of all the varied climes

From torrid heats to Nova Zemblas' snows?  
 Men of the stone, the bronze, the iron age?  
 Thousands of millions shall come forth again  
 Out of their sepulchres?

WALTON.

Their souls still live.  
 Their bodies shall awake from out the dust,  
 And, re-united to their spirits, stand  
 Before the judgment-seat of Christ, our God.

SEYMOUR.

O madman! Ha! Ha! Ha!  
*(A satirical scream outside of the tent echoes his laughter.)*  
*(Seymour turns pale, clutches his sword-handle, and springs to his feet, exclaiming,)*  
 If there 's a devil, he 's let loose to-night!

BELMONT.

Be seated, Seymour. Ho! there, sentinel!  
 Arrest that prowler just behind the tent  
 And bring him hither.

Now once more of Christ.  
 What I have said is well. Would it were all!  
 But, ah! there is a very different side  
 To this grand character. 'T is terrible

To hear his threatenings of eternal wrath,  
His stern denunciations of his foes ;  
And all are foes who yield not to his sway.  
Shall all the sheeted dead before him stand ?  
And shall he say to them who loved him not,  
“ Depart, ye cursed ! ”—whither, dreadful Judge ?  
“ Into the endless fires, to company  
With devils and the damned ! ” I cannot read  
These words without a tremor and a rage.  
For what have I to do with this dead Christ ?  
Dead, buried thirty centuries ago !  
He be my judge ? Consign me to the flames ?  
Yet this is idle ; nor does it become  
My age, my station, thus to fight the wind.  
Again I tell thee, Walton, he is dead.  
'T is a mere myth, that rising from the tomb.  
As to the fact, I should as soon believe  
The Paphian Venus rose from out the sea,  
Or gods joined battle on the plains of Troy.  
But these his followers, who with pious zeal  
Still prate you of religion, faith, and love,  
And hypocritically kneel and weep,  
And beg for mercy from the Nazarene,—  
Delivering all who dare dissent from them  
To the long tortures of an endless hell,—  
Pah ! how I loathe them ! Grant me this, O  
Fate,  
In their own blood to drown them, one and all.  
Let it be said in all earth's coming years,

That I was leader of the mighty host,  
That crushed beneath their heels this serpent  
brood.

WALTON.

Ere thou revilest thus God's blessed Son,  
Thou shouldst bethink thee of thine own foul  
god.

All souls of men are part of deity,—  
Such is thy faith. Now see what thence results.  
All acts of shame, all deeds of infamy,  
That have defiled the history of the world,  
Cold-blooded murders, shocking cruelties,  
Done by the inquisition's rack, and fire,  
Have been the acts, the deeds, the crimes of God !  
My God hates evil with eternal hate.  
His view of sin is not the same with thine.  
With thee it has some element of ill ;  
Weakness, perchance ; human infirmity ;  
To be avoided, for it brings remorse.  
Thou dost rebel against God's just decree  
To punish sin beyond this present world,  
So long as wickedness itself shall last.  
Not so with them whose hearts, divinely touched,  
Feel that the wrath of Heaven 'gainst sin is just.  
In them each thunder of the fiery mount  
Wakes a responsive echo. With what joy  
Unto the covert from the storm they flee !  
But there are those—it may be thou art one—

In whom a warfare long and stern is waged  
Against this painful sense of ill-desert.  
In vain the Spirit of the living God  
Whispers of future woe, of wrath to come.  
Such thoughts are deemed but enemies to peace,  
Foes to be strangled by life's busy cares,  
Wrenched from the mind, drowned in the mad-  
dening bowl,  
By pleasure's soft enchantments charmed to rest,  
As threatening specters by the lute and harp.  
By such devices is the heavenly Guest  
Grieved quite away. Conscience is drugged to  
sleep.

The arch fiend blinds the unbelieving heart,  
And marks the guilty spirit for his own.  
Oh! it is sad to see a soul of man  
Fighting its downward way to endless woe.  
'T is said of one of old who ventured far  
Into the mazes of a labyrinth,  
That through the darkness of its tortuous paths,  
Whence none before him ever had returned,  
He yet retraced his footsteps by the aid  
Of a slight thread he saw not, but could feel.  
So, if there lingers in thy heart, Belmont,  
One faint misgiving that thou mayst have erred,  
If thou feelst aught of the great love of God,  
Which like that slender thread retains its hold  
On thee, thou wanderer from light and life,  
Turn back thy feet before it be too late.

If thou wilt not, then mayst thou rest assured,  
 There is a Law from which thou canst not fly ;  
 And a Law-giver to enforce His law.

BELMONT.

Enough ! The die is cast.  
 Leave me then, Walton ; trouble me no more.  
 I might have heard thee many years ago ;  
 But now thou hadst as well talk to the grave.  
 I have no hope of heaven, no fear of hell.  
 Time will decide between us, which was right.  
 Time answers all enigmas. It should be  
 Hewn out of stone, of like colossal size  
 With Egypt's sphinx,—set face to face with it.  
 A few more days will solve all doubts for me,  
 However long the rest of you may live.  
 Aye ! in a trice a cannon-ball may teach—  
 Rude master—more than all the wisest men  
 Ancient or modern. I have made my choice.

WALTON.

But little more remains for me to say :  
 To thee, Belmont, as generalissimo,  
 I now resign my place upon thy staff,  
 My rank and my commission under arms.

*(He lays a folded paper on the table by Belmont.)*



My purpose is to leave the camp at once,  
Nor longer fight in this unholy war.  
Yet ere I go, I take this cup of wine,  
As yet untasted, and profess my faith  
In Christ, the Crucified, the Nazarene.  
Saviour of men, I see Thee on Thy cross.  
Thy life is almost spent. Thy dying eyes  
Are looking softly, tenderly on me.  
Thy heart beats slowly, throbbing forth Thy  
love,  
Love that no word of earth or heaven could  
speak.

Thou art surrounded by Thine enemies :  
Of Thine Apostles all but one are fled.  
Ev'n thus to-night in all this mighty host  
Only one heart is found that pities Thee.  
Thou saidst, " Remember Me ! " If I forget  
Thy love, Thy grief, Thine agony, Thy death,  
Forget Thou me in the great hour of doom !

*(He tastes the wine, and replaces the cup on the  
table.)*

CANTO IX.

*The Alarm.*

Now suddenly a cry of terror rose  
And nearer grew. All started to their feet  
And hastened to the tent door. Still the sound  
Waxed louder and more terrible. The camp  
Was rousing here and there with hurried rush,  
As when a whirlwind sweeps along the ground  
Covered with autumn leaves. The multitude  
Were in confusion. Now the drums began  
To beat th' alarm, and the hoarse trumpets'  
notes

Sounded a rally. "Is it a new attack?"  
Exclaimed Belmont. "I hear no musketry,  
No war-cry." While he spoke the missing spies  
Up to the tent door rushed in breathless haste.  
"How now, Monteith? What tidings dost thou  
bring?"

Who thus replied:—" 'T is strange, most strange.  
We saw

Upon the city walls a ghostly band  
Treading the sentry rounds. They seemed above  
The stature of mankind; their raiment, white,

And, through the darkness, dazzling to our eyes.  
 These things I saw myself. In them there was  
 In act and mien transcendent majesty ;  
 And in their hands bore each a flaming sword.  
 I would have tarried longer, but my men  
 Were panic-stricken and they fled amain.  
 Our sentinels refused to let them pass.  
 Hence I o'ertook them. Meanwhile what we  
     saw,  
 Was noised along the outskirts of the camp ;  
 And to allay the tumult, on we pressed  
 Toward headquarters."

    " Art thou mad, Monteith ? "

Replied Belmont :—" Come, I will go myself,  
 And see if there be truth in what thou sayst.  
 But hold ! a speedier plan occurs to me.  
 Haste, bring my largest field-glass. It may be  
 That of these goblins I shall catch a glimpse  
 Before they vanish out of mortal view.  
 Can they be seen in th' dark ? Or shall I wait  
 For a good flash of lightning ? "

    Then Monteith

Essayed to answer him, but peal on peal  
 Crashed the loud thunders as it were their last,  
 And Heaven were scourging Hell, Hell cursing  
     Heaven.

Then said the chief : " Methinks I do descry  
 The cause of all this panic ; 't is a trick  
 Of the shrewd enemy this stormy night."

Now was there heard a strange sepulchral  
sound.

It was not thunder. No. It seemed to come  
From some place underground. The firm earth  
shook,

While overhead sobbed the affrighted winds ;  
And men began to fly they knew not where.  
Louder than thousand thunders came a roar,  
And this was followed by unearthly screams,  
Bitter as death, and piercing all the air,  
And some cursed God and gave them up to die.  
What could it be? Anon, a runner came  
And shouted : " Fly ! Fly for your lives ! The  
earth

Is rent. An awful chasm has swallowed up  
Whole legions of our troops."

" Fly ? saidst thou ; fly ?"

Exclaimed Belmont ; " So perish all who fly !  
Fly ! Never !" Then he stamped upon the  
ground,

And cried : " Be still, thou coward Earth ! Be still,  
Ye frenzied winds ! And you, ye thunderbolts,  
Speak not again !"

Then was there heard a voice  
Chanting in measured accents on the gale :

" Day of vengeance ! Day of burning,  
All the world to ashes turning,  
Seer and Sibyl thee portend.

Trump of God, thy clang astounding,  
Through the sepulchres resounding,  
Quick and dead alike shall hear.

Death affrighted, Nature quaking,  
Myriads from their graves awaking  
Shall before the judge appear.

Book of Doom, thy blackened pages  
Hold the sins of all the ages ;  
Nothing that our fear assuages.

King of majesty tremendous,  
Save me from Thy wrath stupendous,  
From the woe that shall not end."

To whom Belmont : " Away, thou fool, away !  
Who art thou ?" Seymour said : " It is the  
voice

Of crazy George." " Away then !" said the chief ;  
" Off ! Off to Bedlam ! Thou but seest the flash  
Of the mad lightnings,—hearest the frantic winds,  
Heaven's thunders, and the groans of trembling  
earth.

A shame upon you, men. To-morrow morn  
Will bring a sky of blue, a breath of spring."  
" To-morrow ?" shrieked the madman ; " Ha !  
to-morrow  
Will be eternity."

“ Again, I say,  
Away ! Begone ! ”

The maniac clenched his fists,  
And cursed him with a curse of withering hate ;  
Then chanted yet more wildly than before :

“ No stifled moan,  
No dying groan ;  
No parting cry  
To the dear God on high !  
The features of his latest breath  
As horrible remain in death. ”

This said, he went his way. At intervals  
His voice rang through the tempest, as he howled  
Like some wild beast : “ Woe ! Woe to all the  
earth !

Woe unto living men ! Woe to the dead ! ”

Now the storm lulled ; the thunder peals gave  
place

To that low, sullen roar, when Nature lies  
Like a caged lion 'neath th' uplifted lash.

“ Come, ” said Belmont ; “ re-enter now the tent,  
Out of this rabble tumult. What ! the lamps  
Are shattered ? One still burns. Relight the rest.  
There is no sleep to-night : we must await  
The coming dawn. Ho ! Walton, art thou here ? ”  
Who thus addressed, replied : “ I would not take

Advantage of the panic to escape.  
 Such had my temper been, I would have gone  
 Without appearing in this place to-night.  
 You have me in your power." He laid his hand  
 Upon his breast. "Here, strike me to the heart,  
 If you adjudge that I deserve to die."  
 He paused. None raised a hand. He said : "I  
     knew

The last great day could not be far removed ;  
 But did not think it was so near as this.  
 Ev'n yet 't is not too late. You may repent,  
 For Mercy's beauteous gate is open still.  
 But, if ye shall refuse to enter in,  
 God's glittering sword is lifted up on high,  
 And His wrath burneth to the lowest hell.  
 Will none of you go with me ?"

Seymour then,  
 As one bewildered, sprang up from his seat.  
 Belmont cried fiercely, "Down ! thou traitor,  
     down !"

Then Walton : "For eternity decide.  
 O what undying interests depend  
 Upon a single step. God help thee now !"  
 Seymour's lip quivered : "If I only thought—"  
 "Aye ! if thou thoughtest," coldly said Belmont ;  
 "I'll tell thee what to do. Go, join the foe !  
 Meanly desert, and then behold thyself  
 To-morrow when this stormy night is past,  
 A renegade amid our enemies,

Scorn of our camp, and deeper scorn of theirs.  
But surely know that when the city falls  
Into our hands, as very soon it must,  
Thou shalt be gibbeted the first of all."

In silence, then, he looked another way :  
But presently he turned to him again ;  
" Art thou still here ? Why waitest thou ? Be-  
gone ! "

Seymour sank in his chair ; covered his face  
With his soft hands, and wept convulsively.  
The chieftain sneered : " Come, dry these girlish  
tears.

To-morrow thou mayst leave the haunts of war.  
I ever thought thou wert more fit for love,  
For song, and sparkling wine, and woman's  
smiles,

Than for the clash of arms on battlefields."

Then he : " O hard, unfeeling, wicked man !  
Thy taunts are too severe. 'T is over now ;  
But there came back a scene of other days.  
Methought I knelt beside my mother's knee ;  
Once more she laid her hand upon my head,  
And taught me say, ' Our Father,' and I felt  
Her warm breath, as she said, ' God bless my  
child,'

And pressed her lips upon my little cheek ;  
And then I clasped my arms about her neck  
And fell asleep to dream of God and Heaven.  
O Mother dear, O God, O piteous Heaven,



Why do ye smile thus on me from the past ?  
 Close thy sweet eyes, my mother ! I am all  
 Unworthy of that look of tenderness.  
 Go, Walton ; we shall never meet again.  
 Never, O never ! Think of me as one  
 Whose light of hope was gone out in despair ;  
 Who fought life's battle wearily and ill,  
 Who won not time, yet lost eternity."

Whereat the chief:—" I too a mother had,  
 Who reared me as a lioness her young.  
 Whether to bless or curse her, I know not.  
 But she is dead, and I shall follow soon."  
 "Soldiers, farewell, a last, a long farewell !"  
 Said Walton, as he walked from out the tent.

After a moment's pause Belmont leaped up,  
 And drew his sword. "Halt ! Walton ; halt !"  
 he cried.

Seymour rushed in between him and the door ;  
 "Stay ! stay ! Belmont, and let him go in  
 peace."

"Seymour, away !" There was a tiger's look  
 In his grey eyes, and on his parted lips  
 A ghastly devil-smile. "Walton shall die.  
 His courage dazzled me, but shall not save  
 A traitor's life. This sword shall not be sheathed,  
 Till it is bathed in blood."

This having said,  
 He thrust him from the way and hastened forth.  
 Then from the blackness that o'erhung the camp

There fell a bolt of fire upon the point  
Of his uplifted sword, and set the tent  
Ablaze with light above the noonday sun,  
While a strong sulphurous odor filled the place,  
And a keen thunder-clap deafened all ears.  
One instant, and the dazzling gleam was gone ;  
Then tremblingly they went without and saw  
Belmont upon the ground, still sword in hand.  
Thus perished he, the Leader of the host ;  
This, the last death of all the human race.

INTERMEZZO.

*The Two Kings.*

It is a castle strong and high,  
And haughtily athwart the sky  
    The massy towers uploom.  
'Tis night, and through the windows gleam  
Full many a light in ruddy stream  
    Far out upon the gloom.

Midnight ! The clangor of a bell  
From topmost tower is heard to swell  
    Out over sea and land ;  
Over the mountain, down the dell,  
Over the plain. They know full well  
    The sound, that mystic band.

But never in such sort before  
Rang that knell the broad earth o'er ;  
    Never so loud, so clear.  
'They list, they pale ; then trooping home,  
With haste, with fright, with speed they come ;  
    They come in haste, and fear.

“To horse ! to horse !” The coursers sweep  
O'er deserts. On the rocky steep  
The flint-fires fiercely flash ;  
And where across the wave they take  
Their way, in long and snowy wake  
The steel-trod billows dash.

Anon they reach the castle gate.  
The myriad lesser soldiers wait  
In clamorous dread and wonder ;  
Three officers in gorgeous dress  
A-through the crowd and tumult press,  
And at the portal thunder.

Through all the place resounds the din.  
The porter's voice is heard within :—  
“ Now who be ye, and whence ? ”  
Then answer came, “ O warder true,  
Famine and Slaughter, they are two ;  
The third is Pestilence.”

This heard, the gate flies open wide.  
Into the court the chieftains ride,  
And hurriedly dismount.  
Their foam-flecked chargers droop beside  
The sculptured lions' granite pride,  
Beside the central fount.

They seek the hall where sits in state  
Dusky yet grand, the Potentate,  
Death, on his iron throne ;

No courtiers there on either hand,  
No body-guards around him stand,  
The Monarch is alone.

Red Slaughter speaks : " Hail, mighty Lord,  
I heard th' alarm, and stayed my sword  
Uplifted in the air."

Pale Famine next : " A mother stood  
Ready to kill her babe for food ;  
I fled and left them there."

Last Pestilence essays to speak,—  
A plague-spot in each burning cheek ;  
His lips are deathly white :  
" A glorious prey escaped from me,  
A city sleeping peacefully ;  
Why are we here to-night ? "

Then Death,—his voice is weak and drear,—  
" Slaughter, my eldest-born, draw near.  
Hush ! Is that door shut to ?  
Famine and Pestilence, all three,  
Nearer, come nearer unto me ;  
Hark what I say to you.

" Ye know our lives are bound in one ;  
When dies the father, dies the son.  
I feel about my heart  
A cold sensation and a pang,  
As I were struck by serpent fang,  
Or pierced by icy dart."

Now in that dim and lofty hall  
A shudder seizes on them all,  
Death and his sons, all four ;  
Yet Slaughter whispers : " Never fear,  
For thou shalt live yet many a year,  
A century, aye ! and more."

" It is a lie !" The words of doom  
Echo sharply through the room.  
They look,—they hold their breath.  
" It was the wind," saith Famine ; then  
Rolls through the vaulted arch again,  
" It is a lie, O Death !"

Between them and the bolted door  
Upriseth through the solid floor  
A spectre gaunt and old,  
A spectre of gigantic size ;  
Two blazing caverns are his eyes,  
His hands a sceptre hold.

And on his head a diadem,  
Lustrous with many a sparkling gem,  
Rests, ponderous and golden ;  
His hair and beard are long and hoar,  
In dark folds trail upon the floor  
His garments quaint and olden.

" O thou," he cries, " so pitiless  
To mortal weakness and distress,  
Thy throne too long has stood.

Thine is a heart that could not spare  
The young, the old, the brave, the fair,  
The beautiful, the good.

“ Ah ! why could nought escape thy rage,—  
Nor reverend feebleness of age  
Nor manhood’s strength and pride,  
Nor infant nestling in the arms  
Of its fond mother, nor the charms  
Of the sweet youthful bride ?

“ No cry for mercy e’er could turn  
Thee from thy purpose fell and stern,  
Cruel, relentless One !  
To thee no mercy shall be shown,  
Thy last red thunderbolt is thrown.  
O Death, thy work is done.”

They gasp for breath, both sons and sire ;  
They quail before those eyes of fire ;  
“ Dread Goblin, who art thou ? ”  
“ Who am I ? Ha ! I heard that bell.  
I too came hither. I am Hell !  
Death, dost thou know me now ?

“ Tremble ! Ye die before the morn.  
I that was old, ere ye were born,  
Live on for evermore.”

His sceptre strikes the iron crown  
From off Death’s head. It falleth down  
And rings upon the floor.

The clangor spreads through courts and halls ;  
Then quake the ancient castle walls  
    From base to turret high.  
The rabble soldiery, that wait  
Impatient at the guarded gate,  
    Hear a loud, bitter cry.

Now on the pavement hard and cold,  
Stamps with his foot, that spectre old ;  
    The crown sinks through the stone.  
Then up the yawning fissure through  
Bursts a flame of ghastly blue  
    Before the iron throne.

From far below, with reeling brain  
They hear a howl, a clanking chain ;  
    They hear the surge and roar,  
As of a fiery, heaving main,  
And with one voice they cry again,  
    More loudly than before.

The desperate soldiers charge the guard,  
They force the gate,—to the grey court-yard  
    Impetuously dash.  
They halt ; the boldest go before,  
And rush against the bolted door.  
    It yieldeth with a crash.

They see in terror and amaze  
A Spectre standing by a blaze,  
    Wrapped in a long, dark shroud.



Back they recoil appalled, and cower.  
“ Ha ! Ha ! It is your mortal hour ! ”  
The Goblin laughs aloud.

He stamps once more. Then rocks the wall ;  
Earth opens and engulfs them all,  
King, castle, soldier, son.  
It closes with a hollow moan ;  
Thy last red thunder-bolt is thrown ;  
O Death, thy work is done.

CANTO X.

*Novissima.*

Now partial darkness rested on the world,  
For the quick lightnings ceased to leap from  
heaven.

But still earth trembled, and the sheeted fire  
Suffused the concave of th' o'erhanging sky  
Fitfully. From midway the upper deep  
The moon gloomed on the sight a blood-red spot.  
"Come, soldiers," said Monteith. "Delay not  
thus.

It may be that his life is not extinct,  
And it may be recovered. Let us see."  
He led the way. They raised the fallen chief,  
Bore him within and laid him on the board,  
Moving the flagon and the cups aside.  
Then stripping off his clothes to find the wound,  
They saw a long black mark adown his back  
From head to foot. It was the lightning's path.  
"It is all over with him. He is dead."  
They bathed the corpse, and then in decent haste  
Arrayed the body, laying on his breast  
The blade that oft o'er battle-fields had waved ;  
But strove in vain his features to compose.

Do what they would, a bitter scowl remained.  
Meanwhile the news had scattered far and wide,  
And a crowd gathered at the marquee door.  
Then in stalked Vinton, chanting mournfully—

“ No parting moan,  
No dying groan,  
No parting cry,  
To the dear God on high ! ”

They turn, they stare at his fantastic guise,  
Clothed in gay rags, while from his wreath-bound  
head

His hair dishevelled on his shoulders lies.  
He sings again as he looks on the dead :

“ The features of his latest breath  
As horrible remain in death. ”

At this Monteith exclaimed : “ O leave the dead !  
For if there be a wizard, thou art he.

Go, Vinton, go in peace. We pity thee. ”

“ Pity yourselves, not me, ” the madman said.

“ Yet go, good Vinton ; do ! ” Monteith replied,

“ And lead this over-curious crowd away. ”

“ It is thy last command, and I obey.

Come, let us go. ” And as he went, he sang,

“ I hear from far  
Th' Almighty's car,  
The rushing wing  
Of cherubim who bring  
Jehovah's Son to judgment dire.

I see on high  
The chariot wheels flash fire.  
Soon heaven and earth shall fly  
Before that dread mysterious eye  
Which pierceth to Creation's utmost shore.  
Time, hoary Time, thyself shalt be no more."

---

With him the rest in silence all withdrew.  
Then were the lights extinguished, all save one ;  
The tent door closed, a guard before it placed.  
Seymour within paced slowly to and fro  
Abstractedly, and sighed from time to time.  
The rest o'erwearied sank upon the earth,  
And slumbered waiting for the coming dawn.

Now was there heard an angel shout from heaven,  
And a loud trump that shook the firmament,  
And the earth answered with a frightful groan,  
Compared with which her thunders all in one  
Were as the south wind's softly breathing plaint.  
Travail, O Earth ! Thy birth-throes are upon  
thee !

The countless nations sleeping in the dust  
Awake. Flesh unto flesh, bone unto bone  
Join in the graves. The coffin-lids burst off.  
Up through the sod struggle the sheeted dead.  
Beautiful cemeteries, graveyards waste

And overgrown with thorus and briars rude,  
Lone hillsides, dark and unfrequented glens,  
Where, of old time, Murder hath hid his prey,  
Teem with new life, with numbers vast are  
thronged.

The monster sea disgorges all her dead.  
Shudder, O Earth, thy death-pangs are upon thee.

Scarce are the echoes of that dreadful blast  
Hushed into silence, ere a prodigy  
Enters the tent,—a headless female form  
In costly cerements robed ; and now the skull,  
Stripped of its ornaments, resumes its place,  
But clothed with flesh as in the former days,  
And from her eyes flame forth the fires of hell.  
She shrieks to Seymour, “Wretch, art thou  
alive ?

Didst think that thou wouldst see my face no  
more ?

That I was dead and ne'er would live again ?  
To-night 't was granted me to leave the pit  
And come with Satan to thy last carouse.”

Upon the instant comes a second blast  
From the dire trumpet, and all living men  
Are changed, and in the twinkling of an eye  
Mortals become immortal. Endless life  
Thrills through affrighted millions round the  
earth ;

Thrills through the trembling Seymour, and he  
grasps

The fateful dagger,—strikes it to his heart,—  
 Then draws it forth all bloodless ; but the pain  
 Is more intense, than in the mortal state.  
 He falls not, reels not. Life in him is strong,  
 Strong for the ages of eternity.  
 And now he cries, “ Great God, I cannot die ! ”  
 And hurls the poniard down upon the floor.  
 Quick as the lightning’s flash, the woman stoops,  
 And snatches from the floor the jeweled blade ;  
 Then screams, while listening devils quake and  
 quail,  
 “ I keep this weapon evermore for thee ! ”

---

*The Dawn.*

Morning of Eternity,  
 Dawning on Time’s troubled sea,  
 Bid the murky shadows flee,  
 Let thy ’larum grand  
 An august reveille roll  
 Round the world from pole to pole,  
 Pass the farthest Ocean’s goal,  
 Thunder o’er the land.

Done ! The trump sublimely sounds.  
 From the ancient battle-grounds,  
 From the abbey’s sacred bounds,  
 From the ruins hoary,

Warriors, on their arms that sleep,  
Startled out of slumbers deep,  
From their centuried bivouac leap  
At the call of glory.

Heroes, tower above the storm !  
With your storied valor warm !  
Shout the martial order, " Form  
Into line of battle !"  
Haply hang above the grave  
Banners once your own, ye brave ;  
Seize again and bid them wave,  
Where the death-shot rattle.

Conquerors from the buried past,  
Deem ye this your clarion blast ?  
Can these legions, trooping fast,  
Warlike legions be ?  
These, the groans of soldiers dying ?  
That, the tramp of cowards flying ?  
Shrieks, to God for mercy crying,  
Shouts of victory ?

Is the earth, in terror quaking,  
With the roar of ordnance shaking,  
Or with charge of horsemen breaking  
Through the front of war ?  
Wherefore, with that quick surprise,  
Raise ye to the clouds your eyes ?

Whom discern ye in the skies  
On His judgment car ?

Hearts that not before have failed,  
Cheeks by peril never paled,  
Eyes in battle's brunt unquailed,  
Own the Godhead's might ;  
Voices now in terror call,  
" Rocks and mountains on us fall,  
Cover us as with the pall  
Of eternal night ! "

---

The misty curtain of the clouds rolled up,  
And in the air, His glittering hosts amid,  
The King of Glory from His car stepped forth,  
And took His seat upon the judgment throne.  
The Nazarene's stern eyes, sweeping the earth,  
Fell on Belmont. Then first the chieftain feared.  
Again the trumpet sounded, and a shout  
Went up from all heaven's army, that the stars  
Shook in their sockets ; direful meteors fell,  
As, when the tempests through the forests rage,  
The leaves in thickening numbers strew the  
ground.

Then Earth swept out from underneath their feet,  
And all mankind were caught up to the clouds.  
Now was the ponderous orb enwrapped in flame.



Sped the huge globe away. The lessening wreck  
Fired minute-guns, and signals of distress  
From her deep-mouthed volcanoes ; but the sun,  
Far underfoot, in sackcloth veiled his face,  
And with his darkling train of planets fled.  
Now were they left alone. The sky was hung  
With black, through which all round the stars  
shone red,  
Like demons' eyeballs glaring on the scene.  
But floods of light poured from the great white  
throne,  
And lit each face with glory or despair.

Pause we, for neither tongue nor pen can tell  
The rapture or the horror of that hour.

---

And now a hush, deeper than that of death,  
Fell on the countless millions gathered there.  
Upon the Judge's left a guilty throng,—  
Alas ! how many they,—waited their doom ;  
But on His right hand more an hundred-fold,  
With blissful eyes expectant, fixed on Christ,  
Yet lips as silent as the emptied graves.  
Once in eternity such silence is !  
About the Judge, behind, above the throne,  
Legions on legions were of angels bright.  
The books were opened,—filled with sin and  
shame

Of all the kindreds of our fallen race,  
From Adam down to the last trumpet's peal.  
Then an archangel brought the book of life.  
Massive and fair, emblazoned with the cross,  
And writ with names of all that loved the Lord.  
The Judge smiled sweetly on its opening page ;  
But ere He spake, a voice of man was heard,  
Chanting in solemn and pathetic strain :—

“Thou, whom Thrones and Powers obey,  
Trodst for me life's rugged way.  
Save me by Thy cross and pain.”

'T was Vinton, standing there among the saved,  
To his right mind restored, like one of old.  
Then twice ten thousand saints took up the song :

“ Seeking me Thy wearied feet  
Fainted in the noontide heat.  
Be thine anguish not in vain.”

And tears welled forth from out the sacred eyes,  
That oft had wept on earth for sinful men.  
He waved the hands, that once were pierced for  
man,  
Toward the ransomed, while His quivering lips  
Essayed to speak the words, “ No, not in vain ! ”  
This said, the awful stillness came again  
And rested on the Christ, on angels, and on men.

CANTO XI.

*Space.*

The Judgment over now, they take their way  
The wicked down to hell to dwell with fiends ;  
To the new Earth, the Christ with all His Saints,  
And the good Angels, first-born sons of God,  
Who as they journeyed, sang melodious praise.

HOLY ANGELS.

Almighty God, and heaven's eternal King,  
Thee, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost we sing.  
Midway Thy presence evermore our flight,  
Through dazzling splendors or through darkest  
    night.

When we look backward to our morning's prime,  
In thee, O God, we see our joy sublime ;  
And, when we forward turn our hopeful gaze,  
Thou art our all, our heaven, to endless days.  
Thus sail we on upon a boundless sea,  
Midway forever Thine eternity,  
Lost in infinitude, and yet at home in Thee !

## RAPHAEL.

Beautiful home of the ransomed Ones ; thou art  
fairer than heaven,  
Far away heaven, so long the abode of the Christ  
and His angels.  
Earth ! thy redemption is come ; thou hast cast  
off thy fiery mantle.  
Verdure, more lovely than ever, now smiles on  
thy hilltops and valleys ;  
Softer the mists that droop o'er thy lakes, or  
cling to thy mountains ;  
Softer the song of the Seas, where the wavelets  
the sands are caressing.  
Earth, thou art freed from the curse ; no grave  
now thy surface disfigures ;  
Gone are the pain and the weeping ; and hushed  
is the cry of the mourner ;  
Murder no more with his eager clutch is throttling  
the helpless ;  
Silenced the screams of the wounded, and silenced  
the shouts of the victors.  
Holiness everywhere shall reign in the hearts of  
the Blessed ;  
Peace of the Purified, bliss of the Glorified crown  
thee forever.

Beautiful city of God, foretold by the garden of  
Eden,

Sweet are thy groves and thy fountains, and  
gentle the flow of thy river ;  
Grandly thy domes of pearl and gold loom up  
toward heaven,—  
Height of calm, where the lifted gaze is lost in  
the azure.  
Here shall the Christ make His home, and God  
and the Lamb be the temple,  
Light and joy of the ransomed Ones, in the glory  
eternal.

## MICHAEL.

Sheathed is my sword, for the battle is o'er ; the  
warfare accomplished.  
Satan is vanquished again, his hosts are sunk in  
Gehenna.  
So be it, God of Right ; may Thy foes thus perish  
for ever,  
Angels or men that dare to upraise a hand 'gainst  
Jehovah.

God of Eternity, tell us : Is conflict the law of  
the ages ?  
Peace for a time, then again, the buckler, the  
sword, and the war-cry ?  
And were it wrong to wish that my sword might  
rust in its scabbard ?

Banners stay furled, and shields uphung on the  
points of the lances ?

This be my prayer, if such I should make, unto  
Thee, O Eternal.

Will what Thou wilt ! I obey ; for Thy will is  
righteous and holy.

Battle we on without end, if that be the edict of  
Heaven.

Great is the Lord our God ; yea He is alone in  
His greatness.

GABRIEL.

Half of Thy life had flown, O Lord our God, the  
Eternal,

Ere we began to be ; or ere Thou createdst an  
angel.

Moment supreme in the life-time of God, the  
moment predestined.

While we stand there and peer back o'er Thy  
limitless ocean of being,

Silence is on the Deep, a terrible silence and  
darkness ;

Brink of our nothingness, infinite God, but the  
marge of Thy fulness.

Out of that nothingness angels and archangels  
flashed into being ;  
Not like the lightnings that leap from the night-  
cloud, and shine but a moment.  
We are immortal ; we live while Thou livest, O  
God, the Undying.  
Silence eternal was broken with song, with the  
voice of thanksgiving,  
Choiring the praise of the Power that made us,  
the Goodness that blessed us.  
Simple Thy law for the angels : Love God and  
love one another.

Bright as the sunsets of earth were the hours,—  
as bright and as fleeting.  
Soon came ambition and pride, the daring rebel-  
lion of Satan.  
Then too the law that had blest us before, now  
dealt out its curses,  
Teaching us Thou wouldst reveal Thyself in the  
Good, by the Evil,—  
Lesson amazing and darting a light to the heaven  
of heavens,  
Sin the meanwhile downcasting its shadow, so  
baleful, to Tophet.

O the dense darkness till Michael drave out the  
Dragon from heaven !  
Then came the morning, the roseate morning,  
that brightened to noonday.  
Out of the Nothing came Man. O Man, thou  
wonder of wonders !  
Mystery fathomless ! Spirit and Matter distinct,  
yet united ;  
Giving thy life to thine offspring ; bound to them  
all by a race-tie ;  
Falling away from God, for thyself and for all  
who came after ;  
Bringing the curse of sin and of death, on all  
generations  
Knitted together like chain-mail,—an angel cannot  
understand it.

Joined to the Godhead thrice holy ; the Sinless  
made sin for the sinful,  
Bearing their horrible guilt, and the pangs that  
were due to transgression.  
Rising, O Man, from thy grave, to live for ever and  
ever,  
Dwelling in yonder beautiful home with the  
Christ in His Glory ;  
Washed from thy sins in His blood,—thy weep-  
ing forgot in the smiling ;



Whiter than snow thy heart, and fuller of joy  
than an angel's.

Here as before we beheld the beautiful tints of  
the sunset,  
Followed, alas ! by the Night, yet with starlight  
of promise and mercy ;  
Followed in turn by the Morn, the Morn of the  
brightness unending.  
Marvellous God, is this the unchangeable law of  
Thy dealings ?  
Gloomings that vanish away, but Midnights and  
Noondays abiding ?  
Thus shall we learn what Thou art ? And thus  
shall we fathom Jehovah ?  
What can we know of Thee more ? And what can  
remain for the future ?  
Can there be wrath against sin, more just, O  
God, or more fearful ?  
Can there be love more divine, or pity more deep  
and more tender ?  
Spare us, O Infinite One ! O spare us ! we tremble  
before Thee,—  
Not from a fear of Thine anger, but from the  
sight of Thy glory.  
Rest we on Thee, for Thy gentle arms shall up-  
hold us forever.

## ALL HOLY ANGELS.

Evening and Morning are Thy Second day,  
O Lord Most High ! Thy years shall never fail.

---

*The Holy City.*

They entered now the circumambient air,  
That softly wrapped the earth with cloudless  
blue.

Stars, that had glared so red upon the sight,  
Turned silver-white and closed their eyes in  
sleep.

'T was morn. The sunlight fell on battlements,  
Next on the tops of lofty palaces,  
On fountains throwing high their sheeny spray,  
And stole its downward course to trees and  
flowers,

Glistened along the streets of burnished gold,  
And shimmered on the river's rippling wave.

Meanwhile a cohort of the heavenly host  
With doubled speed entered the city first,  
And stood with folded wings upon the wall  
Above the gates, each gate a single pearl.  
Toward the middle one upon the east,  
Christ, His Apostles, Prophets, Martyrs came.  
Before them went the vanguard of the host  
Angelic, choring in their mightiest notes :

“Lift up your heads, O ye gates ;  
And be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors ;  
And the King of glory shall come in.”

Then answered them the angels on the wall:

“Who is this King of Glory ?”

To which a shout came back in thunder-tones :

“The Lord strong and mighty ;  
The Lord mighty in battle.”

Again with voices jubilant they cried ;

“Lift up your heads, O ye gates ;  
Even lift them up, ye everlasting doors ;  
And the King of Glory shall come in.”

Then from the cohort :

“Who is this King of Glory ?”

And now once more from angels and from saints,  
With rapture greater than the bliss of heaven,  
Because the Morning Stars together sang,  
And all the Sons of God shouted for joy :

“The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory.”

FINIS.



















